



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

THE TIMOTHY HOPKINS ROOM

THIS BOOK MAY NOT BE TAKEN FROM THIS
ROOM, BUT IF DESIRED FOR HOME USE, AN-
OTHER COPY MAY BE HAD AT THE LOAN DESK



LELAND STAN

SITY



THE NEW REPUBLIC

THE ST. MARTIN'S LIBRARY

Pocket Size, cloth gilt, 2s. net per vol. ; leather, gilt edges, 3s. net per vol.

By Sir **WALTER BESANT**.
London.

Westminster.

All Sorts and Conditions of Men.

Sir Richard Whittington.

Gaspard de Coligny.

By Sir **WALTER BESANT**
and **E. H. PALMER**.
Jerusalem.

By **BOCCACCIO**.
The Decameron.

By **ROBERT BUCHANAN**.
The Shadow of the Sword.

By **HALL CAINE**.
The Deemster.

By **WILKIE COLLINS**.
The Woman in White.

By **DANIEL DEFOE**.
Robinson Crusoe. With 37 Illustrations by **GEO. CRUIKSHANK**.

By **CHARLES DICKENS**.
Speeches. With a Portrait.

By **AUSTIN DOBSON**.
Eighteenth Century Vignettes.
In Three Series. With Illusts.

By **THOMAS HARDY**.
Under the Greenwood Tree.

By **BRET HARTE**.
Condensed Novels.

By **O. W. HOLMES**.
The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table. With Illustrations.

Compiled by **A. H. HYATT**.
The Charm of London.
The Charm of Edinburgh.

By **RICHARD JEFFERIES**.
The Life of the Fields.
The Open Air.
Nature near London.

By **CHARLES LAMB**.
The Essays of Elia.

By **LORD MACAULAY**.
History of England from the Accession of James II. to the Death of William III. 5 vols.

By **JUSTIN MCCARTHY**.
Reign of Queen Anne. 1 vol.
A History of Our Own Times from the Accession of Queen Victoria to 1897. In 3 volumes.
History of the Four Georges and William IV. In 2 volumes.

By **GEO. MACDONALD**.
Works of Fancy and Imagination.
In 10 volumes.

I. Within and Without—Hidden Life. II. The Disciple—Gospel Women—Book of Sonnets—Organ Songs. III. Violin Songs—Songs of the Days and Nights—Book of Dreams—Roadside Poems—Poems for Children. IV. Parables—Ballads—Scotch Songs. V. & VI. Phantastes. VII. The Portent. VIII. Light Princess—Giant's Heart—Shadows. IX. Cross Purposes—Golden Key—The Carasoy—Little Daylight. X. Cruel Painter—Wow o' Riven—The Castle—The Broken Swords—The Gray Wolf—Uncle Cornelius.

By **W. H. MALLOCK**.
The New Republic.

By **CHARLES READE**.
The Cloister and the Hearth.
With 32 Full-page Illustrations.
'It is Never Too Late to Mend.'

By **R. L. STEVENSON**.
Travels with a Donkey.
An Inland Voyage.
Memories and Portraits.
Virginibus Puerisque.
Studies of Men and Books.
New Arabian Nights.
Across the Plains.
The Merry Men.
Prince Otto.
Collected Poems.

By **H. A. TAINE**.
History of English Literature. In 4 volumes. With 32 Portraits.

By **MARK TWAIN**.
Sketches.
By **WALTON** and **COTTON**.
The Complete Angler.

POCKET AUTHORS.

The Pocket R. L. S.
The Pocket Richard Jefferies.
The Pocket George MacDonald.
The Pocket Dickens.
The Pocket Thackeray.
The Pocket Emerson.
The Pocket Thomas Hardy.
The Pocket George Eliot.
The Pocket Charles Kingsley.
The Pocket Ruskin.
The Pocket Beaconsfield.
The Flower of the Mind.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

OR

CULTURE, FAITH, AND PHILOSOPHY IN
AN ENGLISH COUNTRY HOUSE

BY

W. H. MALLOCK

AUTHOR OF

THE NEW PAUL AND VIRGINIA 'IS LIFE WORTH LIVING?' ETC.



Πάντα γέλωσ καὶ πάντα κόνις καὶ πάντα τὸ μηδέν,
Πάντα γὰρ ἐξ ἀλόγων ἐστὶ τὰ γιγνόμενα

Greek Anthology

FINE-PAPER EDITION

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS

1908

823.6

225mc

258813

Y8A98LJ 0807M4T3

TO
'VIOLET FANE'

AUTHORESS OF
'ANTHONY BABINGTON' 'THE QUEEN OF THE FAIRIES' ETC.

This Book is Inscribed

BY HER SINCERE FRIEND

THE AUTHOR

THE NEW REPUBLIC

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

TOWARDS the close of last July, when the London season was fast dying of the dust, Otho Laurence had invited what the *Morning Post* called 'a select circle of friends, to spend a quiet Sunday with him at his cool villa by the sea.

This singular retreat was the work of a very singular man, Otho Laurence's uncle, who had squandered on it an immense fortune, and had designed it as far as possible to embody his own tastes and character. He was a member of a Tory family of some note, and had near relations in both Houses of Parliament; but he was himself possessed of a deep though quiet antipathy to the two things generally most cherished by those of his time and order, the ideas of Christianity and Feudalism; and he studiously kept himself clear of all public life. Pride of birth, indeed, he had in no small measure; but it was the pride of a Roman of the Empire rather than of an Englishman; a pride which, instead of connecting him with prince or people, made him shun the one as a Cæsar, and forget the other as slaves. All his pleasures were those of a lettered voluptuary, who would, as he

himself said, have been more in place under Augustus or the Antonines ; and modern existence, under most of its aspects, he affected to regard as barbarous. Next to a bishop, the thing he most disliked was a courtier ; next to a courtier, a fox-hunting country gentleman. But nothing in his life, perhaps, was so characteristic of him as his leaving of it. During his last hours he was soothed by a pretty and somewhat educated housemaid, whom he called Phyllis, and whom he made sit by his bedside, and read aloud to him Gibbon's two chapters on Christianity. Phyllis had just come to the celebrated excerpt from Tertullian, in which that father contemplates the future torments of the unbelievers, when the parish clergyman, who had been sent for by Mr. Laurence's widowed sister-in-law, arrived to offer his services. 'How shall I admire'¹—these were the words that, read in a low sweet tone, first greeted his ears when he was shown softly into the sick chamber—'how shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs, so many fancied gods, groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness ; so many magistrates who persecuted the name of the Lord, liquefying in a fiercer fire than ever they kindled against the Christians !' The clergyman was at first much reassured at hearing words so edifying ; but when he turned to old Mr. Laurence, he was dismayed to see on his pale face no signs of awe, but only a faint smile, full of sarcastic humour. He therefore glanced at the book that was lying on the girl's lap, and discovered to his horror the work of the infidel historian. He was at first struck dumb ; but, soon recovering himself, began to say something suitable at once to his own profession and to the sick man's needs. Mr. Laurence answered

¹ *Vide Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, chapter xv.

him with the greatest courtesy, but with many thanks declined any assistance from him ; saying wistfully that he knew he had not long to live, and that his one wish was that he could open his veins in a bath, and so fade gently into death ; ‘and then,’ he added, ‘my soul, if I have one, might perhaps be with Petronius, and with Seneca. And yet sleep would, I think, be better than even their company.’ The poor clergyman bade a hasty adieu, and Phyllis resumed her reading. Mr. Laurence listened to every word : the smile returned to his lips that had for a moment left them, and was still upon them when, half-an-hour afterwards, he died, so quietly that Phyllis did not perceive it, but continued her reading for some time to ears that could hear nothing.

All his property he left to his nephew Otho, including his splendid villa, which was indeed, as it was meant to be, a type of its builder. It was a house of pillars, porticoes, and statues, designed ambitiously in what was meant to be a classical style ; and though its splendours might not be all perhaps in the best taste, nor even of the most strictly Roman pattern, there was yet an air about its meretricious stateliness by which the days of the Empire were at once suggested to one, a magnificence that would at any rate have pleased Trimalcio, though it might have scandalised Horace.

Otho Laurence inherited with his uncle’s house something of the tastes and feelings of which it was the embodiment. But, though an epicure by training and by temper, he had been open to other influences as well. At one time of his life he had, as it is expressed by some, experienced religion ; and not religion only, but thought and speculation also. Indeed, ever since he was twenty-four, *he had been* troubled by a painful sense that he *ought to have some mission in life.* The only difficult

What speaking eyes ! And what hair, too—deep dead black, with those white starry blossoms in it. I don't think I ever saw anyone move so gracefully ; and how proudly and piquantly she poises

On her neck the small head buoyant, like bell-flower on its bed !

'That,' said Laurence, when Leslie had done, 'is Mrs. Sinclair, who has published a volume of poems, and is a sort of fashionable London Sappho. But come,—we shall be going in to dinner directly. You shall have Lady Ambrose on one side of you, and shall take in Miss Merton.'

CHAPTER III

LAURENCE, though he had forewarned his guests of his *menu* before they left the drawing-room, yet felt a little anxious when they sat down to dinner ; for he found it not altogether easy to get the conversation started. Lady Ambrose, who was the first to speak, began somewhat off the point.

'What a charming change it is, Mr. Laurence,' she said, 'to look out on the sea when one is dressing, instead of across South Audley Street !'

'Hush !' said Laurence softly, with a grave, reproving smile.

'Really,' said Lady Ambrose, 'I beg your pardon. I thought Dr. Jenkinson had said grace.'

'If he has,' said Laurence, 'it is very good of him, for I am afraid he was not asked. But what I mean is, that you must only talk of what is on the cards ; so be good enough to look at your *menu*, and devote your attention to the Aim of Life.'

'Really, this is much too alarming,' said Lady Ambrose.

'How is one to talk at so short a notice on a subject one has never thought about before?'

'Why, to do so,' said Laurence, 'is the very art of conversation; for in that way, one's ideas spring up fresh like young roses that have all the dew on them, instead of having been kept drying for half a lifetime between the leaves of a book. So do set a good example, and begin, or else we shall never be started at all; and my pet plan will turn out a fiasco.'

There was, indeed, as Laurence said this, something very near complete silence all round the table. It was soon broken.

'Are you High-church or Low-church?' was a question suddenly uttered in a quick eager girl's voice by Miss Prattle, a young lady of eighteen, to the astonishment of the whole company. It was addressed to Dr. Jenkinson, who was sitting next her.

Had a pin been run into the Doctor's leg, he could not have looked more astounded, or given a greater start. He eyed his fair questioner for some time in complete silence.

'Can you tell me the difference?' he said at last in a voice of considerable good humour, yet with just a touch of sharpness in it.

'I think,' said Miss Merton, who was sitting on the other side of him, 'that my card is a little different. I have the "Aim of Life" on mine, and so I believe has everybody else.'

'Well,' said the Doctor, laughing, 'let us ask Miss Prattle what is her aim in life.'

'Thank Heaven,' said Laurence, 'Dr. Jenkinson has begun. I hope we shall all now follow.'

Laurence's hope was not in vain. The conversation sprang up everywhere; and the company, though

in various humours, took most of them very kindly to the solemn topic that had been put before them. Mr. Luke, who was sitting by Mrs. Sinclair, was heard in a loudish voice saying that his own favourite Muse had always been Erato; Mr. Rose had taken a crimson flower from a vase on the table, and looking at it himself with a grave regard was pointing out its infinite and passionate beauties to the lady next him; and Mr. Stockton was explaining that the Alps looked grander, and the sky bluer than ever, to those who truly realised the atomic theory. No one, indeed, was silent except Mr. Herbert and Mr. Storks, the former of whom smiled rather sadly, whilst the latter looked about him with an inquisitorial frown.

Laurence was delighted with the state of things, and surveyed the table with great satisfaction. Whilst his attention was thus engaged, Lady Ambrose turned to Leslie, and began asking him if he had been in town much this season. She was taken with his look, and wished to find out if he would really be a nice person to like.

'Please,' interposed Laurence pleadingly, 'do try and keep to the point—please, Lady Ambrose.'

'I want to find out Mr. Leslie's aim in life by asking him where he has been,' she answered.

'I have been in a great many places,' said Leslie, 'but not to pursue any end—only to try and forget that I had no end to pursue.'

'This is a very sad state of things,' said Lady Ambrose; 'I can always find something to do, except when I am quite alone, or in the country when the house is empty. And even then I can *make* occupation. I draw, or read *a book*, or teach my little boy some lessons. But come—*what do you think* is the real aim of life?—since that *is what I must ask him*, is it not, Mr. Laurence?'

'Don't ask me,' said Leslie; 'I told you I hadn't a notion; and I don't suppose we any of us have.'

'That can't be true,' said Lady Ambrose, 'for just listen how everyone is talking. I wish we could hear what they are saying. You might learn something then, perhaps, Mr. Leslie, since you are so very ignorant.'

It happened that, as Lady Ambrose said this, the conversation suddenly flagged, and Laurence took advantage of the lull to ask if any satisfactory conclusions had been come to during the past five minutes, 'because we up here,' he said, 'are very much in the dark, and want to be enlightened.'

'Yes,' said Mr. Storks gruffly, 'has any one found out what is the aim of life?' As he said this he looked about him defiantly, as though all the others were butterflies, that he could break, if he chose, upon his wheel. His eye at last lit upon Mr. Saunders, who, considering this a challenge to himself, immediately took up the gauntlet. The young man spoke with the utmost composure, and, as his voice was high and piercing, everybody could hear him.

'The aim of life,' he said, adjusting his spectacles, 'is progress.'

'What is progress?' interrupted Dr. Jenkinson coldly, without looking at Mr. Saunders, and as though any answer to his question was the last thing he expected.

'Progress,' replied Mr. Saunders slowly, 'has been found, like poetry, somewhat hard to define.'

'Very true,' said the Doctor drily, and looking straight before him.

His accents were of so freezing a sharpness that he seemed to be stabbing Mr. Saunders with an icicle. Mr. Saunders, however, was apparently quite unwounded.

'But I,' he continued with the utmost complacency

Second's ; the only difference is that they are incomparably more stupid ; and that, instead of decking their immorality with the jewels of wit, they clumsily try to cover it with the tarpaulin of respectability. This has not made the immorality any the better ; it has only made respectability the most contemptible word in the English language.'

'The fop of Charles's time,' said Leslie, 'aimed at seeming a wit and a scholar. The fop of ours aims at being a fool and a dunce.'

'Yes,' said Mr. Herbert, 'society was diseased then, it is true, and the marks of disease disfigured and scarred its features. Still, in spite of this, it had some sound life left in it. But now the entire organism is dissolving and falling asunder. All the parts are refusing to perform their functions. How, indeed, could this possibly be otherwise, when the head itself, the aristocracy, the part whose special office is to see and think, has now lost completely both its brains and eyes, and has nothing head-like left it except the mouth ; and that cannot so much as speak—it can only eat and yawn ?'

'Society, you see, Mr. Herbert,' said Lady Ambrose, who felt bound to say something, 'is so much larger now than it was.'

'Oh,' said Laurence, shrugging his shoulders, 'in that sense, I really think there is almost no society now.'

'I don't see how there can be,' said Miss Merton, 'when what is called society is simply one great scramble after fashion. And fashion is such a delicate fruit, that it is sure to be spoilt if it is scrambled for.'

'I am glad,' said Laurence, 'you don't abuse fashion as some people do. I look on it as the complexion of *good society*, and as the rouge of bad ; and when society *gets sickly and loses its complexion*, it takes to rouge—as

it is doing now ; and the rouge eats into its whole system, and makes its health worse than ever.'

'You are the last person, Mr. Laurence,' said Lady Ambrose, 'you who go out so much, that I should have expected to hear talking against society like that.'

'Ah !' said Laurence, 'we cannot escape from our circumstances : I only wish we could. I go into the best society I can get, but I am not blind to the fact that it is very bad. Of course there are a number of the most delightful people in it : I am not denying that for a moment. But not only is society not made up out of a few of its parts, but even the best parts suffer from the tone of the whole. And taking society as a whole, I honestly doubt if it was ever at any time so generally bad as it is now. I am not saying that it has forgotten its duties—that it cannot even conceive that it ever had any ; that is of course quite true : but Mr. Herbert has said that already. I am not complaining of its moral badness, but of its social badness—of its want of practical skill in life as a fine art—a want that it often feels itself, and yet has not the skill to remedy. Think for a moment how barbarous are its amusements ; how little culture there is in its general tone ; how incapable it is of any enlightened interest !'

'Really,' said Mr. Stockton, 'I think you are doing society a great injustice. It seems to me that enlightened interest is the very thing that is everywhere on the spread. The light of intellect is emerging from the laboratory and the dissecting-room, where it had its birth, and is gilding, with its clear rays, the dinner-table, and even the ball-room. A freer, a truer, and a grander view of things, seems to me to be rapidly dawning on the world.'

'I fear, my dear sir,' said Mr. Luke, 'that these pleasing opinions of yours will not bear testing.'

‘Do you mean,’ said Mr. Stockton, ‘that society as a rule is not infinitely better informed now than it was thirty years ago? Has it not infinitely fewer prejudices and infinitely more knowledge?’

‘We should look to the effects of the knowledge, not to the knowledge itself,’ said Mr. Luke. ‘We cannot test the health of a society from looking over its examination papers in physical science.’

‘How would you test it?’ said Mr. Stockton, with a slight curl of the lip.

‘There are many tests,’ said Mr. Luke. ‘Here is one amongst the very subjects that Mr. Laurence has ordered us to talk about—art and literature.’

‘I accept the test,’ said Mr. Stockton. ‘What, then, can be nobler than much modern poetry? There is some that I look upon as quite of the highest order.’

‘When I spoke of our literature,’ said Mr. Luke loftily, ‘I was not thinking of poetry. We have no poetry now.’

‘Indeed?’ said Mr. Stockton; ‘I imagined you had written some yourself.’

‘Ah!’ exclaimed Mr. Luke, drawing a long sigh, ‘I once knew what Goethe calls “the divine worth of tone and tears.” But my own poems only prove the truth of what I say. They could only have been written in evil days. They were simply a wail of pain; and now that I am grown braver, I keep silence. Poetry in some ages is an expression of the best strength; in an age like ours it is the disguise of the worst weakness—or, when not that, it is simply a forced plant, an exotic. No, Mr. Stockton, I was not speaking of our poetry, but of the one kind of imaginative literature that is the natural growth of our own day, the novel. Now, the *novel itself is a plant which, when it grows abundantly and alone, you may be sure it is a sign of a poor soil.*

But don't trust to that only. Look at our novels themselves, and see what sort of life it is they image—the trivial interests, the contemptible incidents, the absurdity of the virtuous characters, the viciousness of the characters who are not absurd. Spain was in some ways worse in Cervantes' time than England is in ours; but you may search all our novels for one character that has one tithe of Don Quixote's heroism, for one of our sane men that breathed in so healthy and pure an atmosphere as the inspired madman. And this is not from want of ability on the novelists' part. Some of them have powers enough and to spare; but the best novels only reflect back most clearly the social anarchy, and the bad ones are unconscious parts of it.'

'And as for our painting,' said Mr. Herbert, 'that reflects, even more clearly than our literature, our hideous and our hopeless degradation. The other day, when I walked through the Royal Academy, my mind was literally dazzled by the infernal glare of corruption and vulgarity that was flashed upon me from every side. There were, indeed, only two pictures in the whole collection that were not entirely abominable; and these were, one of them three boulders in the island of Sark, the other a study of pebbles on the beach at Ilfracombe.'

'I know little about the technicalities of art,' said Mr. Stockton, 'so I will not presume to dispute this point with you.'

'Well,' said Leslie, 'here is another test quite as good as art and literature—love and money, and their relations in our days.'

He would have continued speaking; but Mr. Herbert allowed him no time.

'The very things,' he said, 'I was about to touch upon—the very things the pictures the other day

suggested to me. For, seeing how the work of the painter becomes essentially vile so soon as it becomes essentially venal, I was reminded of the like corruption of what is far more precious than the work of any painter—our own English girls, who are prepared for the modern marriage-market on precisely the same principles as our pictures for the Royal Academy. There is but one difference. The work of the modern painter is vile from its very beginning—in its conception and execution alike; but our girls we receive, in the first instance, entirely fair and sacred from the hands of God himself, clothed upon with a lovelier vesture than any lilies of the field——'

'Really,' whispered Lady Ambrose to Laurence, 'Providence has done so very little for us, as far as vesture goes.'

'——And we,' Mr. Herbert went on, 'with unspeakable profanity presume to dress and to decorate them, till the heavenly vesture is entirely hidden, thinking, like a modern Simon Magus, that the gifts of God are to be purchased for money, and not caring to perceive that, if they are to be purchased with the devil's money, we must first convert them into the devil's gifts.'

'Yes,' said Mrs. Sinclair, with a faint smile, 'the day of two matches is quite gone over now.'

But her words were drowned by Mr. Saunders, who rose and at the top of his voice, and in a state of great excitement, 'Electric telegraphs—railways—steam printing presses let me beg of you to consider the great subject set for us—riches and civilisation—how to judge of the present generation by the light of

'have considered them,' said Mr. Herbert, 'for the last thirty years—and with inexpressible melancholy.'

'I conceive,' said Mr. Saunders, 'that you are somewhat singular in your feelings.'

'I am,' replied Mr. Herbert; 'and that in most of my opinions and feelings I am singular, is a fact fraught for me with the most ominous significance. Yet, how could I—who think that health is more than wealth, and who hold it a more important thing to separate right from wrong than to identify men with monkeys—how could I hope to be anything but singular in a generation that deliberately, and with its eyes open, prefers a cotton-mill to a Titian?'

'I hold it,' said Mr. Saunders, 'to be one of the great triumphs of our day, that it has so subordinated all the vaguer and more lawless sentiments to the solid guidance of sober economical considerations. And not only do I consider a cotton-mill, but I consider even a good sewer, to be a far nobler and a far holier thing—for holy in reality does but mean healthy—than the most admired Madonna ever painted.'

'A good sewer,' said Mr. Herbert, 'is, I admit, an entirely holy thing; and would all our manufacturers and men of science bury themselves underground, and confine their attention to making sewers, I, for one, should have little complaint against them.'

'And are railways, telegraphs, gas-lamps—is the projected Channel tunnel, nothing in your eyes? Is it nothing that all the conditions of life are ameliorated, that mind is daily pursuing farther its conquest over matter?'

'Have we much to thank you for,' said Mr. Herbert, 'that you have saved us from an hour of sea-sickness, if in return you give us a whole lifetime of heart-sickness? Your mind, my good sir, that you boast of, is so occupied in subduing matter, that it is entirely forgetful'

of subduing itself—a matter, trust me, that is far more important. And as for your amelioration of the conditions of life—that is not civilisation which saves a man from the need of exercising any of his powers, but which obliges him to exert his noble powers; not that which satisfies his lower feelings with the greatest ease, but which provides satisfaction for his higher feelings, no matter at what trouble.'

'Other things being equal,' said Mr. Saunders, 'I apprehend that the generation that travels sixty miles an hour is at least five times as civilised as the generation that travels only twelve.'

'But the other things are *not* equal,' said Mr. Herbert; 'and the other things, by which I suppose you mean all that is really sacred in the life of man, have been banished or buried by the very things which we boast of as our civilisation.'

'That is our own fault,' said Mr. Saunders, 'not the fault of civilisation.'

'Not so,' said Mr. Herbert. 'Bring up a boy to do nothing for himself—make everything easy for him—to use your own expression, subdue matter for him—and that boy will never be able to subdue anything for himself. He will be weak in body, and a coward in soul—'

'Precisely,' said Mr. Saunders. 'And that is really, if you look dispassionately at the matter, a consummation devoutly to be wished. For why do we need our bodies to be strong?—To overcome obstacles. Why do we need to be brave?—To attack enemies. But by and by, when all our work is done by machinery, and we have no longer any obstacles to overcome, or any hardships *to endure*, strength will become useless, and bravery *dangerous*. And my own hope is that both will have

ere long vanished ; and that weakness and cowardice, qualities which we now so irrationally despise, will have vindicated their real value, by turning universal civilisation into universal peace.'

'Yes,' said Mr. Herbert, 'that is exactly what the modern world is longing for—a universal peace ; which never can nor will mean anything else than peace with the devil.'

'Really,' said Lady Ambrose to Leslie, 'do you think we are in such a bad way as all this? Dr. Jenkinson, I must ask you—you always know these things—do you think we are so very bad?'

'Yes—yes,' said the Doctor, turning towards her with a cheerful smile, 'there is a great deal that is very bad in our own days—very bad indeed. Many thoughtful people think that there is more that is bad in the present than there has ever been in the past. Many thoughtful people in all days have thought the same.'

'Whenever wise men,' said Herbert, 'have taken to thinking about their own times, it is quite true that they have always thought ill of them. But that is because the times must have gone wrong before the wise men take to the business of thinking about them at all. We are never conscious of our constitutions till they are out of order.'

'Ah! yes,' said Mr. Luke ; 'how true that is, Herbert ! Philosophy may be a golden thing. But it is the gold of the autumn woods, that soon falls, and leaves the boughs of the nation naked.'

'Yes,' said Leslie, 'leaving nothing but

Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.'

'Thank you, Mr. Leslie,' exclaimed Mr. Herbert across the table, 'thank you—an exquisitely apt quotation.'

God saw that it was good," was He thinking, as He saw this, of the exact velocity it travelled at, and of the exact laws it travelled by, which you wise men are at such infinite pains to discover ; or was He thinking of something else, which you take no pains to discover at all—of how it clothed the wings of the morning with silver, and the feathers of the evening with gold? Is water, think you, a nobler thing to the modern chemist, who can tell you exactly what gases it is made of, and nothing more ; or to Turner, who could not tell you at all what it is made of, but who did know and who could tell you what it is made—what it is made by the sunshine, and the cloud-shadow, and the storm-wind—who knew how it paused in the taintless mountain trout-pool, a living crystal over stones of flickering amber ; and how it broke itself turbid, with its choirs of turbulent thunder, when the rocks card it into foam, and where the tempest sifts it into spray? When Pindar called water the best of things, was he thinking of it as the union of oxygen and hydrogen——'

'He would have been much wiser if he had been,' interposed Dr. Jenkinson. 'Thales, to whose theory, as you know, Pindar was referring——' But the Doctor's words were utterly unavailing to check the torrent of Mr. Herbert's eloquence. They only turned it into a slightly different course.

'Ah ! masters of modern science,' he went on, 'you can tell us what pure water is made of ; but, thanks to your drains and your mills, you cannot tell us where to find it. You can, no doubt, explain to us all about sunsets ; but the smoke of your towns and your factories has made it impossible for us to see one. However, each *generation is wise in its own wisdom* ; and ours would *sooner look at a foetus in a bottle, than at a statue of the*

god Apollo, from the hand of Phidias, and in the air of Athens.'

During all this speech Mr. Storks had remained with his face buried in his hands, every now and then drawing in his breath through his teeth, as if he were in pain. When it was over he looked up with a scared expression, as if he hardly knew where he was, and seemed quite unable to utter a syllable.

'Of course,' said Mr. Stockton, 'mere science, as science, does not deal with moral right and wrong.'

'No,' said Mr. Saunders, 'for it has shown that right and wrong are terms of a bygone age, connoting altogether false ideas. Mere automata as science shows we are—clockwork machines, wound up by meat and drink——'

'As for that,' broke in Mr. Storks, who had by this time recovered himself—and his weighty voice at once silenced Mr. Saunders, 'I would advise our young friend not to be too confident. We may be automata, or we may not. Science has not yet decided. And upon my word,' he said, striking the table, 'I don't myself care which we are. Supposing the Deity—if there be one—should offer to make me a machine, if I am not one, on condition that I should always go right, I, for one, would gladly close with the proposal.'

'But you forget,' said Allen, 'that in the moral sense there would be no going right at all, if there were not also the possibility of going wrong. If your watch keeps good time you don't call it virtuous, nor if it keeps bad time do you call it sinful.'

'Sin, Lord Allen,' said Mr. Storks, 'is a word that has helped to retard moral and social progress more than anything. Nothing is good or bad, but thinking makes it so; and the superstitious and morbid way in which a

number of entirely innocent things have been banned as sin, has caused more than half the tragedies of the world. Science will establish an entirely new basis of morality; and the sunlight of rational approbation will shine on many a thing, hitherto overshadowed by the curse of a hypothetical God.'

'Exactly so,' exclaimed Mr. Saunders eagerly. 'Now, I'm not at all that sort of man myself,' he went on, 'so don't think it because I say this.'

Everyone stared at Mr. Saunders in wonder as to what he could mean.

'We think it, for instance,' he said, 'a very sad thing when a girl is as we call it ruined. But it is we really that make all the sadness. She is ruined only because we think she is so. And I have little doubt that that higher philosophy of the future that Mr. Storks speaks of will go far, some day, towards solving the great question of women's sphere of action, by its recognition of prostitution as an honourable and beneficent profession.'

'Sir!' exclaimed Mr. Storks, striking the table, and glaring with indignation at Mr. Saunders, 'I could hardly have believed that such misplaced flippancy——'

'Flippancy! it is reasoned truth,' shrieked Mr. Saunders, upsetting his wine-glass.

Luckily this brought about a pause. Laurence took advantage of it.

'See,' he said, 'Dr. Jenkinson has left us. Will no one have any more wine?—Then suppose we follow him.'

CHAPTER IV

It was a calm, lovely evening. The moon was rising *over the sea*, and the sea was slowly silvering under it.

A soft breeze breathed gently, full of the scents of flowers ; and in the low sky of the west there yet lingered a tender peach-colour.

The ladies were sitting about on chairs, grouped together, but with several little groups within the group ; and amongst them all was Dr. Jenkinson, making himself particularly agreeable to Mrs. Sinclair. When the gentlemen emerged there was a general stir, and Lady Ambrose, shutting up a volume of St.-Simon's Memoirs, said, 'Well, Mr. Laurence, we have been talking most industriously about the future.'

Laurence was standing with Mr. Luke on the step of the dining-room window, and both were looking out gravely on the tranquil scene.

'Do you remember,' said Laurence, 'that it was here, three years ago, that you composed the lines that stand last in your published volumes?'

'I remember,' said Mr. Luke dreamily. 'What an evening that was !'

'I wish you would repeat them,' said Laurence.

'What is the good?' said Mr. Luke ; 'why rouse again the voices that haunt

About the mouldered lodges of the past ?'

'Mr. Luke,' said Lady Ambrose appealingly, 'I do so wish you would.'

'Is Mr. Luke going to recite poetry?' said Mrs. Sinclair, coming languidly up to them. 'How delicious !' She was looking lovely in the dim light, with a diamond star shining in her dark hair, and for a mortal bard there was positively no resisting her appeal.

Mr. Luke, with a silent composure, pressed his hands for a moment against his forehead ; he gave one hem ; and then in a clear melodious voice began as follows :—

*'Softly the evening descends,
Violet and soft. The sea
Adds to the silence, below
Pleasant and cool on the beach
Breaking; yes, and a breeze
Calm as the twilight itself
Furtively sighs through the dusk,
Listlessly lifting my hair,
Fanning my thought-wearied brow.*

*Thus I stand in the gloom
Watching the moon-track begin
Quivering to die like a dream
Over the far sea-line
To the unknown region beyond.*

*'So for ages hath man
Gazed on the ocean of time
From the shores of his birth, and, turning
His eyes from the quays, the thronged
Marts, the noise and the din
To the far horizon, hath dreamed
Of the timeless country beyond.*

*Vainly: for how should he pass,
Being on foot, o'er the wet
Ways of the unplumbed waves?
How, without ship, should he pass
Over the shipless sea
To the timeless country beyond?*

*'Ah, but once—once long ago,
Came there a ship white-sailed
From the country beyond, with bright
Oarsmen, and men that sang;
Came to Humanity's coasts,
Called to the men on the shore,
Joyously touched at the port.*

*Then did time-weary man
Climb the bulwarks, the deck
Eagerly crowding. Anon
With jubilant voices raised,
And singing, "When Israel came
Out of Egypt," and whatso else
In the psalm is written, they passed
Out of the ken of the land,
Over the far sea-line
To the unknown region beyond.*

*'Where are they now, then—they
That were borne out of sight by the ship—
Our brothers, of times gone by?
Why have they left us here
Solemn, dejected, alone,
Gathered in groups on the shore?
Why? For we, too, have gazed
O'er the waste of waters, and watched
For a sail as keenly as they.
Ah, wretched men that we are!
On our haggard faces and brows
Aching, a wild breeze fawns
Full of the scents of the sea,
Redolent of regions beyond.
Why, then, tarries the ship?
When will her white sail rise
Like a star on the sea-line? When?*

*'When?—And the answer comes
From the sailless face of the sea,
"Ah, vain watchers, what boots
The calm of the evening?
Have ye not watched through the day
Turbulent waves, the expanse
Endless, shaken with storm,
And ask ye where is the ship?
Deeper than plummet can dive
She is bedded deep in the ooze,
And over her tall mast floats
The purple plain of the calm."*

*'Yes—and never a ship,
Since this is sunken, will come
Ever again o'er the waves—
Nay, not even the craft with the fierce
Steersman, him of the marsh
Livid, with wheels of flame
Circling his eyes, to smite
The lingering soul with his oar.
—Not that even. But we
Drop where we stand one by one
On the shingles and sands of time,
And cover in taciturn gloom,
With only perhaps some tear,
Each for his brother the hushed
Heart and the limitless dreams
With a little gift of sand.'*

'Thank you, Mr. Luke, so much,' said Lady Ambrose. 'How charming! I am always so fond of poems about the sea.'

'Ah,' said Mr. Luke, turning to Mrs. Sinclair, 'these are emotions scarcely worth describing.'

'Certainly not,' muttered Mr. Storks, half aloud, as he moved off to discover Lady Grace.

Mr. Luke stood apart, and surveyed the party with a look of pensive pity. On Mr. Storks, however, whose last remark he had overheard, his eyes rested with an expression somewhat more contemptuous. The brightening moonlight fell softly on the group before him, giving it a particularly picturesque effect, as it touched the many colours and folds of the ladies' dresses, and struck here and there a furtive flash from a gem on wrist or throat. The tranquil hour seemed to have a tranquillising effect on nearly everyone; and the conversation reached Mr. Luke's ears as a low murmur, broken only by the deep sound of Mr. Storks's voice, and the occasional high notes of Mr. Saunders, who seemed to Mr. Luke, in his present frame of mind, to be like a shrill cock crowing to the world before the sunrise of universal philistinism.

Laurence meanwhile had caught Miss Merton's eye looking at him with a grave regard; and this had brought him instantly to her side, when Mr. Luke had ended his recital.

'We didn't spare the times we live in, to-night, did we?' he said slowly to her in a low voice. 'Well, well—I wonder what it is all coming to—we and our times together! We are certainly a curious medley here, all of us. I suppose no age but ours could have produced one like it—at least, let us hope so, for the credit for the ages *in general*.'

'*I must say,*' said Miss Merton, smiling, 'that you

seem to take to the age very kindly, and to be very happy amongst your friends. But you did not tell us very much of what you thought yourself.'

'I don't often say what I think,' said Laurence, 'because I don't often know what I think ; but I know a great many things that I don't think ; and I confess I take a pleasure in saying these, and in hearing others say them ; so the society that I choose as a rule represents not the things I think I approve, but the things I am sure I repudiate.'

'I confess,' said Miss Merton, 'I don't quite understand that.'

'Shall I tell you,' said Laurence, 'why I live so much in society—amongst my friends, as you call them ? Simply because I feel, in my life, as a child does in a dark room ; and I must have some one to talk to, or else I think I should go mad. What one says is little matter, so long as one makes a noise of some sort, and forgets the ghosts that in one's heart one is shuddering at.'

Miss Merton was silent for a moment, and looked up into the sky, in which the stars were now one by one appearing.

'I suppose,' she said presently, 'you think it is a very poor affair—life's whole business. And yet I don't see why you should.'

'Not see why I should ?' repeated Laurence. 'Ah, that shows how little you, from your position, can sympathise with ours. I am not surprised at it. Of course it is out of the question that you should. You, happy in some sustaining faith, can see a meaning in all life, and all life's affections. You can endure—you can even welcome its sorrows. The clouds of *ennui* themselves for you have *silver linings*. For your religion is a kind of philosopher's stone, turning whatever it touches into something precious

But we—we can only remember that for us, too, things had a meaning once: but they have it no longer. Life stares at us now, all blank and expressionless, like the eyes of a lost friend, who is not dead, but who has turned an idiot. Perhaps you never read Clough's *Poems*, did you? Scarcely a day passes in which I do not echo to myself his words:—

Ah well-a-day, for we are souls bereaved !

Of all the creatures under heaven's wide cope,

We are most hopeless who had once most hope,
And most beliefless who had once believed.'

'And do you think,' said Miss Merton in a low tone, 'that belief in these days brings no painful perplexities too? Do you think that we can look out on the state of the world now, and think about its future, without anxiety? But really,' she went on, raising her voice, 'if I, like you, thought that Christianity was not true, I should not waste my time in lamenting over it. I should rather be glad that I had got free from a gigantic and awful imposition.'

'What!' exclaimed Laurence, 'should we rejoice at our old guide dropping dead amongst the mountains, even though he had lost his way; if so we are left hopeless, and without any guide at all?'

'You have your consciences,' said Miss Merton, with some decision in her voice; 'you surely don't mean to say that you have lost them?'

'As for our consciences,' said Leslie, who was standing close by, 'we revere them so much that we fancy they possess some power. But conscience, in most souls, is like an English Sovereign—it reigns, but it does not govern. Its function is merely to give a formal assent to the Bills passed by the passions; and it knows, if it opposes what those are really bent upon, that ten to one it will be obliged to abdicate.'

'Let us hope that the constitutions of most souls are more stable than that,' said Miss Merton. 'As far as morality goes, I expect you have quite enough to guide you; and if you think religion false, I don't see why its loss should trouble you. And life itself, remember, has plenty of pleasures. It is full of things worth living for.'

'Is it?' exclaimed Leslie with sudden emphasis, and he looked into Miss Merton's face with an expression half absent and half wondering. 'Is there anything in life that you really think is, for its own sake, worth living for? To me it seems that we are haunted with the power of imagining that there might be, and are pursued with the knowledge that there never is. Look at that lovely water before us, with its floods of moonlight—how it ripples, how it sparkles away into the distance! What happiness sights like these suggest to one! How happy they might make us—might, but they never do! They only madden us with a vague pain, that is like the sense of something lost for ever.'

'Still,' said Miss Merton, 'life is not all moonlight. Surely friendship and affection are worth having?'

'Let me beg you, Miss Merton,' said Leslie, replying to her tone rather than to her words, 'not to think that I am always pining and bemoaning myself. Fortunately the deeper part of one's nature will often go to sleep, and then the surface can enjoy itself. We can even laugh with our lips at the very things that our hearts in silence are breaking for. But as for happiness, that is always like prophecy, it is only fulfilled in the future; or else it is a miracle—it only exists in the past. The actual things we wish for we may very likely get, but they always come too late or too soon. When the boy is in love, he tries to feel like a man; when the man is in love, he tries to feel like a boy; and both in vain.'



-

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is crucial for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part outlines the specific procedures and protocols that must be followed when recording transactions. This includes details on how data should be collected, stored, and reviewed to ensure its integrity and accuracy.

3. The third part addresses the role of the management team in overseeing the record-keeping process. It stresses the need for regular communication and collaboration between different departments to ensure that all relevant information is captured and analyzed.

4. The final part of the document provides a summary of the key points discussed and offers recommendations for further improvement. It encourages the organization to continue refining its record-keeping practices to meet the evolving needs of its stakeholders.

mind from one week's end to another. And so here I am utterly alone—friendless, and with nothing to help me; feeling that, were it not for the petty contemptible interests I manufacture for myself from day to day, life would be quite unbearable.'

'And yet,' said Miss Merton, 'you have much to make you happy—much that you would be sorry to lose.'

'I have a certain position,' said Laurence, 'and a certain amount of wealth, and I would not willingly lose anything of either of these; but that is not because, in my heart, I value them; but because, if I lost them, I might in my heart cease to despise them.'

'Surely,' said Miss Merton, 'there is a better way of looking at the matter. You came into the world with all your lower ambitions satisfied for you. The ground therefore is quite clear for the higher ambitions. That is why I think an aristocracy, as a rule, must always be the best governors of men, for their ambitions, as a rule, are the only genuine ones. Think, too, what an advantage mere wealth is. The highest labour will never produce money, but generally requires it.'

'That is just the difficulty,' said Laurence. 'What shall I labour for? I am almost maddened sometimes, as I sit all the day idle, and seem to hear the hateful wasted moments slipping away from me. And I *could* do something, I am sure. I feel I have powers.'

'I think,' said Miss Merton, 'that all I should say to you is, find something to do. The power to find or make an object is, I think, a great part of genius. However,' she said, with some sympathy in her voice, 'If you are in difficulties, I am sure I wish I could help you.'

'Well,' said Laurence in a subdued voice, 'I'm sure I beg your pardon for my egoism. I never talked so

long about myself in my whole life before ; and I promise never to do so again.'

Leslie meanwhile had moved away towards Mrs. Sinclair, who, looking particularly fascinating, was still commanding the attentions of Dr. Jenkinson. The Doctor was standing by her, all deferent gallantry, and, to Leslie's surprise, was saying something to her about Sappho.

'And now,' said Mrs. Sinclair, with a little appealing dainty smile, 'I want to ask you something about the Greek Anthology too. I can't read much Greek myself : but a gentleman who used to be rather kind to me, translated me a good deal of Greek poetry, once upon a time—when my husband,' she said, with a little shrug of the shoulders, 'used to go to sleep after his dinner.'

Dr. Jenkinson here glanced suspiciously at Mrs. Sinclair.

'Now, what I want you to tell me,' she said, 'is something about some little—ahem—little love songs, I think they were—*έρωτικ*—something or other—I really can't pronounce the name.'

The Doctor started.

'And, Dr. Jenkinson, please,' Mrs. Sinclair went on in a voice of plaintive innocence, 'not to think me a terrible blue-stocking, because I ask you these questions ; for I really hardly know any Greek myself—except perhaps a verse or two of the New Testament ; and that's not very good Greek, I believe, is it? But the gentleman who translated so much to me, when he came to these little poems I speak of, was continually, though he was a very good scholar, quite unable to translate them. Now, why should that have been, I want to know? Are Greek *love-poems* very hard?

'Well,' said the Doctor, stammering, yet reassured by

Mrs. Sinclair's manner, 'they were probably—your friend perhaps—well—they were a little obscure perhaps—much Greek is—or——'

'Corrupt?' suggested Mrs. Sinclair naïvely.

The word was a simple one : but it sufficed to work a miracle on Dr. Jenkinson. For the first time in his life to a lady who united the two charms of beauty and fashion, to both of which he was eminently susceptible, Dr. Jenkinson was rude. He turned abruptly away, and staring hard at the moon, not at Mrs. Sinclair, said simply, 'I don't know,' with the most chilling intonation of which those words are capable. He then moved a pace away, and sat down on a chair close to Miss Merton.

Mrs. Sinclair turned to Leslie, with a flash in her eyes of soft suppressed laughter.

'How lovely the evening is !' murmured Leslie, responding to the smile.

'Yes,' said Mrs. Sinclair, looking out dreamily over the sea, 'it almost realises one's idea of perfect beauty.'

'Really, Mrs. Sinclair,' said Leslie, 'you are certainly most Hellenic. First you talk of Sappho, now of Ideas of Beauty. Are you a Platonist?'

'Mr. Leslie, of course I am,' said Mrs. Sinclair, somewhat misapprehending his meaning. 'I never heard such an impertinent question. Platonism, however, is a very rare philosophy in these days, I'm afraid.'

'Ah, and so you too think we are all of us very bad, do you?' said Leslie. 'It may be so, of course; and yet men at least often generalise very hastily and very wrongly, I am sure. How often, for instance, do we say that all wives nowadays are inconstant, simply because such are the *only ones* we remember, not because they *are the only ones we know*.'

This speech was quite in Mrs. Sinclair's own manner, and she looked at Leslie with a smile of appreciation half humorous and half sentimental.

'Ah,' she began to say, in a voice that had just a touch of sadness in it, 'if we could but all of us love only when we ought, and where we ought—' But here she paused. Her voice died away, and she leaned her head upon her hand in silence.

Leslie was going to have spoken; but he was suddenly arrested by the sound of Dr. Jenkinson, close beside him, talking to Miss Merton in a tone of unusual earnestness.

'I don't wonder,' he was saying, 'that you should feel in perplexity sometimes; whichever way we look at things there will be perplexities. But there is such a thing as goodness; and goodness in the end must triumph, and so in this large faith let us rest.'

'And,' said Donald Gordon in his soft deferential voice, which always sounded as if he was saying something deeply devotional, 'don't you think it is a higher thing to be good for good's own sake than for God's? and, whatever men may believe about having another life, and a beautiful heaven, with gold streets, and with jewelled fortifications, don't you think that morality really is after all its own reward?'

'But what of those poor people,' said Miss Merton, 'who cannot be moral—whom circumstances have kept from being ever anything but brutalised? I dare say, she said, turning to the Doctor, quite forgetting his sacred character, 'that I shall hardly be able to make you understand such a notion as that of living for God's glory. But still, if there be not a God for whose glory we can live, and who in his turn will not leave us all to ourselves, what then? Think of all those who, in spite of hard surroundings, have just had strength enough to struggle

to be good, but to struggle only—whose whole moral being has been left writhing in the road of life, like an animal that a cart-wheel has gone over, just lifting its eyes up with a piteous appeal at us who will not help it——’

Miss Merton looked at Dr. Jenkinson and paused. The moon shone tenderly on his silver hair, and his keen eyes had something very like moisture in them.

‘Yes,’ he said; ‘these are great, great difficulties. But there is another life in store for us—another life, and a God. And don’t think that the world is growing to disbelieve in these. Remember how many intelligent laymen count themselves members of the Church of England, simply because they believe in these two doctrines.’

‘It has always been inexplicable to me,’ said Mr. Storks, who had been attracted by the sound of the Doctor’s voice, ‘whence this longing for a future life could have arisen. I suppose there are few things the very possibility of which science so conclusively disproves.’

‘And yet,’ said Laurence, who had been speaking for a moment to Mrs. Sinclair, ‘I can’t help thinking at certain times that there may be a whole world of things undreamed of by our scientific philosophy. Such a feeling is touched by the sight of an “Ora pro animâ meâ,” or a “Resurgam,” on a quiet tombstone, or the sign of the cross made by a mother in hope and in sorrow on the forehead of her dead child.’

Miss Merton looked at Laurence with some wonder in her large expressive eyes, Mr. Storks snorted, and Dr. Jenkinson blinked.

‘See,’ said Donald Gordon, ‘the moonlight grows brighter and brighter every moment. It is *bewildering in its dazzling paleness.*’

'And there,' said Laurence, 'do you catch it?—that is the light-ship on the horizon, like a large low star.'

Laurence seated himself on the balustrade, and, leaning on his elbow, looked up into the clear hollow skies.

'World upon world,' he exclaimed at last, 'and each one crowded, very likely, with beings like ourselves, wondering what this whole great universe is!'

'And the vast majority of them believing in a wise and just God,' said Leslie, 'for I see no reason why ours should be the stupidest world in all creation.'

'Yes,' said Laurence, 'and in each world a small select band, that has pierced through such a husk of lies, and has discovered the all-golden truth, that the universe is aimless, and that for good and evil the end is all one.'

Dr. Jenkinson had a sensible horror of the stars : and as soon as they were mentioned, he turned round in his chair, giving his back to the group, Miss Merton included ; whilst Mr. Storks walked away, not without dignity.

'Mrs. Sinclair is going to sing in a moment,' said Laurence ; 'some one is gone to fetch her guitar.'

'Hush !' exclaimed Miss Merton, 'do just listen to this.'

'Good gracious !' said Laurence in a whisper, 'Mr. Storks is at my aunt at last.'

Mr. Storks had been watching ever since dinner for an opportunity of discussing with Lady Grace the true position of woman, as settled by modern science. He was peculiarly full of this subject just now, having received only that morning a letter from a celebrated American physician, who stated very strongly as his opinion, that the strain of what is called the higher *education* was most prejudicial to the functions of

maternity, and that the rights of woman might very probably be fatal to the existence of man. As soon as he got hold of Lady Grace, he led up to this point with startling rapidity; having been perfectly charmed at starting to find that she fully agreed with him that the prejudices of the present day were doing more harm to woman's true interests than anything else.

'It is a pleasure,' said Mr. Storcks, 'to discuss these matters with a person so thoroughly enlightened as yourself. You will of course see from what Dr. Boston says how entirely suicidal is the scheme of turning woman into a female man. Nature has marked out her mission for her plainly enough; and so our old friend Milton was right in his meaning after all, when he says that man is made for God, and woman for God through him, though of course the expression is antiquated.'

'Surely,' said Lady Grace with animation, 'not only the expression is antiquated, but the meaning also is contrary to all true fairness and enlightenment.'

'I confess, I don't see that,' said Mr. Storcks with a look of smiling deference.

'What!' cried Lady Grace, 'is it not contrary to reason—let me put it to your own candour—for a man who knows that his wife, ages hence, will be a seraph singing before the throne of God, to consider her only made for God through him—to consider her, indeed, as a thing made simply for her husband's use?'

This answer of Lady Grace's took Mr. Storcks quite aback. He knew not how to comport himself. His jaw fell—he stared—he said nothing. He felt as though he had been assassinated. But luckily at this very moment, liquid and clear, and exquisitely modulated, the sounds of Mrs. Sinclair's voice, singing a *song* :—

*Darling, can you endure the liquid weather,
The jasmine-scented twilight, or my dear?
Or do you still remember how together
We read the sad sweet story 'Guinevere,'
Love, in one last year's twilight?
Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse.*

*Ah, the flowers smelt sweet, and all unheeding
Did I read to you that tender tale.
Oh my love, until my voice, in reading,
How those lovers greeted 'passion-pale,'
Trembled in the soft twilight.
Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse.*

*Then our eyes met, and then all was over—
All the world receded cold and far;
And your lips were on my lips, my lover;
And above us shone a silver star,
Through depths of molting twilight.
Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse.*

*Darling, no July will ever find us
On this earth, together, more. Our fates
Were but a moment cheated. Then, behind us
Shrilled his voice for whom Caina² waits,
Shattering our one sweet twilight.
Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse.*

*I shall know no more of summer weather,
Nought will be for me of glad or fair,
Till I join my darling, and together
We go for ever on the accursed air,³
There in the dawnless twilight.
Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse.*

'What a lovely voice!' said Laurence to Miss Merton.
'I wonder how she will sound singing before the throne.'

'She will be obliged to take lessons in a rather different style,' said Miss Merton, unable to suppress a smile; and then she suddenly checked herself, and looked grave.
'Mrs. Sinclair has always interested me,' she said. 'I often come across her in London, but I hardly know her.'

Dante, Inferno, v. 137.

² *Ibid. v. 107.*

³ *Ibid. v. 31.*

'Mr. Laurence,' said Mrs. Sinclair, 'you must now make Mr. Leslie sing, for I discover that he can play the guitar too.'

Leslie was of course pressed, and with some reluctance consented.

'I suppose,' he said, 'we are all of us more or less moon-struck to-night, so I had best sing the silliest thing I know; and as I don't think anything can be sillier than a song I once wrote myself, I will sing that.'

He touched a few chords carelessly, and yet with the manner of a practised player; paused for a moment, and then again striking the instrument began to sing. He was watched at first with merely a languid curiosity; and Miss Prattle whispered to Lady Ambrose that his attitude was very affected; but curiosity and criticism were both lost in surprise at the first sound of his rich and flexible voice, and still more so at the real passion which he breathed into the following words, rude and artless as they were:—

*Oh, her cheek, her cheek was pale,
Her voice was hardly musical;
But your proud grey eyes grew tender,
Child, when mine they met,
With a piteous self-surrender,
Margaret.*

*Child, what have I done to thee?
Child, what hast thou done to me?
How you froze me with your tone
That last day we met!
Your sad eyes then were cold as stone,
Margaret.*

*Oh, my eyes to me
Yet—sorrowful
In vain I frown
Every day down,*

Neither John Baptist, no, nor One greater than John, was left by God (as the children of Israel were left by Pharaoh) to gather straw himself to make bricks. The materials were all prepared ready to their hands by their Heavenly Father. And so, let us be especially and prayerfully on our guard against considering Christianity as having come into the world at once, ready-made, so to speak, by our Saviour, as a body of theological doctrines. Any honest study of history will show us that the Apostles received no such system; that our Lord Himself never made any claim to the various characters with which subsequent thought invested Him; and that to attribute such claims to Him would be an anachronism of which He would have scarcely understood the meaning. If we only clear our eyes of any false theological glamour, a very slight study of the inspired writers will at once show us this. We shall see how uncertain and shifting at first everything was. We shall see what a variety of conflicting opinions the early Church entertained even upon the most fundamental subjects—such, for instance, as the identity of the God of the Old Testament with the God of the New, which was denied by a large number of the early Christians: we shall see how widely divergent were the systems of Jewish and Pauline Christianity, and how discrepant and tentative are the accounts given by St. Paul and by the author of the Fourth Gospel of the mystical nature of Christ, whom they tried to identify with different mysterious potencies supposed by the Jewish-Alexandrian philosophers to be coexistent with God. And if we pursue the history of the Church a little farther, we shall find many more things to startle us. We shall find, for instance, the most renowned apologist of early Catholic times, a materialist, holding the materiality not of the soul of man only, but of God also. “Nihil enim”—these are this Father’s words—“si non corpus. Omne quod est.

corpus est." Thus we see,' said the Doctor cheerfully, looking round him with a smile of benignant triumph, and blinking with his eyes, '*that difference of opinion about the dogmas of religion is nothing new. It existed in the Jewish Church ; the phenomenon was only prolonged by Christianity. Later Judaism and primitive Christianity were both made up of a variety of systems, all honestly and boldly thought out, differing widely from each other, and called by the honourable appellation of heresies : and of these, let me remind you, it is the glory of the Church of England to be composed likewise.*

'Nor is this all,' he went on in a softer and more appealing tone ; '*not only are all these things so confused and doubtful ; but we now see that, in the face of recent criticism, we cannot even be quite sure about any of the details of the divine life of our Lord. But in all this'*—the Doctor's voice here became still more ærial, and he fixed his eyes upon the painted ceiling of the theatre, as though he were gazing on some glorious vision—'*in all this there is nothing to discompose us. We can be quite sure that He lived, and that He went about doing good, and that in Him we have, in the highest sense, everlasting life.*

'Let us then no longer fight against the conclusions of science and of criticism, but rather see in them the hand of God driving us, even against our will, away from beliefs and teachings that are not really those of His son. If we do not do this—if we persist in identifying the false Christianity with the true—the false, when it is at last plucked rudely away from us, as it must be, will carry away a part of the true with it. And as long as we remain in this state of mind, we are never for a moment free. We can never open a philological review, or a scientific experiment, without trembling. Witness the engaging

so much public attention on the subject of animal automatism, and the marvellous results which experiments on living subjects have of late days revealed to us; a frog with half a brain having destroyed more theology than all the doctors of the Church with their whole brains can ever build up again. Thus does God choose the "weak things of this world to confound the wise." Seeing, then, that this is the state of the case, we should surely learn henceforth not to identify Christianity with anything that science can assail or even question. Let us say rather that nothing is or can be essential to the religion of Christ which, when once stated, can be denied without absurdity. If we can only attain to this conception, we shall see truly that this our faith is indeed one "that no man taketh away from us."

'If we be thus once "stablished in the faith," all human history, and the history of Christianity especially, will assume for us a new sacredness and a new significance. We shall recognise gladly its long struggles of growth, and its struggles for existence, and see how in all these were at work the great principles of evolution. We shall see how Christian perfection emerged gradually out of imperfection—nay, that it was only through imperfection that this perfection was possible. For although, as we now know, all the various theological systems that have sprung up about Christianity, and have been so long current, are not Christianity—are most of them, indeed, not even sense—yet it was through these that true Christianity made its way, and extended itself in a corrupt and ignorant world. For the world has been given from age to age just so much of the truth as it has been able to bear, and it is only, let us remember, from receiving it tempered in this wise proportion, that it has been able to receive it at all. But these times of the world's probation are now passing away. It is now length ceasing to be under "tutors and governors:" it

is learning to "put away childish things." It is coming to a sense that it is now fitted to receive Christ's truth pure, and without any admixture or wrappage of falsehood. And so, as it looks back over all the various opinions once so fiercely agitated about religion, it recognises in all of them a common element of good, and it sees that all theologians and all sects have really agreed with one another, and been meaning the same thing, even when they least suspected or wished it. Nor is it, as modern study is showing us, varieties of Christianity only that this deeper unity underlies, but all other religions also. It has been well observed by a great Roman Catholic writer now living, that whenever any great saintliness of life is to be observed amongst infidels and heretics, it is always found to be due to the presence of certain beliefs and rules which belong to the Catholics. And in like manner, we may say too, that whenever any great saintliness of life is to be observed amongst Catholics, it is due to the presence of certain beliefs and rules that belong to the infidels and the heretics—and indeed to all good men, no matter what their religion is.

'Such are the views that all the most enlightened men of our own day are coming to. But the process is gradual; and meanwhile let us not rebuke our weaker brethren, if for the present "they follow not after us;" let us rather bear with them, and make all allowance for them; for we must remember, as I have said before, that those evils to which they still cling, but from which we, under God's mercy, are trying to free ourselves, have done good service in their time; and that even such doctrines as those of eternal punishment, or of sacerdotal absolution, or the subtleties of sacramental systems, or the adoxes of the Athanasian Creed, have assisted in the good—have been, in some sense, "schools to God." And even if we do occasio

the
men
me

that thinker. And it seems to me to be the hopeful distinguishing feature of the present day, that men are learning generally to recognise this truth—that they are learning not to cry out against progress, but to estimate its grand and inevitable laws, and submit themselves willingly to them. And the tendency of our day is, I am proud to say, a tendency towards firm, solid, verifiable knowledge, and, as a result of this, towards the acquisition of a firm and solid happiness.

'To me,' said Mr. Herbert, 'it seems rather that the only hope for the present age lies in the possibility of the individual wiser than the rest getting the necessary power, and in the most arbitrary way possible putting a stop to this progress—utterly stamping out and obliterating every general tendency peculiar to our own time. Mr. Storks will perhaps think me very foolish. Perhaps I am. I freely own that I could more easily tell a good lie, if I saw it, than a good piece of protoplasm, and that I think the understanding of a holy moral law, by which an individual may live, of infinitely more importance than the discovery of all the laws of progress in the world. But let Mr. Storks despise me, and not be angry with me—'

'My dear sir,' interposed Mr. Storks, with a gruff courtesy, 'why should I do either the one or the other?'

'Because,' said Mr. Herbert, slightly waving his hand, and speaking with great emphasis, 'had I only the power, I would myself put a forcible stop to all this evolution. I would make a clean sweep of all the improvements of the present day so much vaunts. I would collect an army of strong, serviceable, honest workmen, and send them to blow up Manchester, and Birmingham, and Liverpool, and Leeds, and Wolverhampton——'

‘What!’ exclaimed Lady Ambrose. ‘Did not they know that?’

‘You forget,’ said Laurence, ‘that this was very long ago.’

‘To be sure,’ said Lady Ambrose; ‘and they were of course all heathens. Well—and what conclusions did they come to as to the nature of justice?’

‘At first,’ said Laurence, ‘though Socrates himself was amongst them, they were all completely at a loss how to define it. But at last they hit upon the notion of constructing an ideal perfect state, in which of course justice would be lurking somewhere. Now there are in life, Plato says, four great virtues—wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice; and no sooner has the ideal state been constructed, than it appears that three of these virtues are specially illustrated and embodied, each in a particular class of citizens. Thus, wisdom is specially embodied in the theoretical politicians and religious speculators of the day; courage is embodied in the practical men who maintain and execute the regulations and orders of the philosophers; and temperance is embodied in the commercial and industrial classes, who loyally submit themselves to their betters, and refrain from meddling in matters that are too high for them. And now, where is justice? In what class is that embodied specially?’

‘In the judges and the magistrates and the policemen,’ said Lady Ambrose.

‘No,’ said Laurence; ‘it is peculiar to no class. It resides in all. It is that virtue which enables the others to exist and to continue.’

‘*But surely,*’ said Lady Ambrose, ‘all that is not what *we mean by justice now?*’

‘*certainly not,*’ said Laurence; and my book was

designed to investigate what justice is, as it exists now. I, like Plato, constructed a state, making it, however, a real rather than an ideal picture. But when I had done this, I could find no earnest thinking class to represent wisdom ; no class of practical politicians that would carry out even the little wisdom they knew, and so represent courage ; and certainly no commercial or industrial class that would refrain for a single day from meddling in matters that were too high for them, and so represent temperance. So I analysed life in a somewhat different way. I divided it into happiness, misery, and justice. I then at once discovered that the rich represented all the happiness of which we are now capable, and the poor all the misery ; and that justice was that which set this state of things going and enabled it to continue.'

'Ah, Laurence,' exclaimed Mr. Herbert, clapping his hands gently in sad applause, 'I like that. I wish you had worked out this idea more fully.'

'Suppose,' exclaimed Leslie, 'that we try this afternoon to construct a Utopia ourselves. Let us embody our notions of life as it ought to be in a new Republic.'

'Well,' said Lady Ambrose, 'I am not a Conservative : I don't object. I'm sure at any rate that there is much we could all of us alter, if we only had our own way.'

'Much,' said Lady Grace, with severe briskness.

'Much,' said Miss Merton, with a soft, half-serious smile.

'Much,' said Lord Allen, catching eagerly at the idea.

'Well, then,' said Laurence, 'let us all do our best to give those airy somethings, our aspirations, a local habitation and a name.'

The majority of the company took very kindly to the proposal. Lady Grace was especially pleased, as i

seemed to provide at once a whole afternoon's occupation for the party ; and it was arranged accordingly that as soon as luncheon was over they should adjourn for castle-building to a shady spot in the garden.

CHAPTER III

GUIDED by Lady Grace, the guests gradually converged after luncheon towards the appointed spot, straggling thither by various ways, and in desultory groups ; passing down broad flights of steps flanked by gods and goddesses, and along straight terraces set with vases and Irish yews ; while busts of orators, poets, and philosophers, with Latin inscriptions, glimmered to right and left of them in groves of laurels ; and scaly Tritons, dappled with green lichens, spouted up water in the middle of gleaming basins. Everything was to-day looking at its loveliest. There was an unusual freshness in the warm summer air. Beyond the green shrubs the sea shone bright and blue ; and through the shrubs the sea-breeze moved and whispered.

Laurence strolled slowly on behind with Miss Merton, choosing a path which none of the others had taken.

‘How delicious this is !’ said Miss Merton, lifting her hat to enjoy the breeze upon her forehead. ‘Nobody could be in bad spirits in a place like this. There is something so fresh and living everywhere, and even when we lose sight of the sea we still hear it.’

‘Yes,’ said Laurence. ‘I believe these gardens are like Keats’s island. There is no recess in them

Not haunted by the murmurous sound of waves.’

‘*And how perfectly everything is kept ! What gardeners you must have !*’ said Miss Merton, as they turned up

a narrow winding walk, thickly set on either side with carefully-trimmed laurels.

The whole place was, indeed, as Miss Merton said, kept perfectly. Not a weed was on the grey gravel; not a single twig called for pruning. Every vase they passed was full of the most delicious flowers. Overhead the branches of limes and of acacia-trees murmured gaily. Everything seemed to be free from care, and to be laughing, light of heart, in the bright weather.

'I am taking you this way,' said Laurence, 'because I want to show you what I think may perhaps interest you.'

As he spoke these words, a sudden bend in the walk brought them face to face with something that gave Miss Merton a sudden sensation of surprise. It was a small classical portico built in a style of the most severe simplicity, through which by an iron gate one passed into an open space beyond. What surprised Miss Merton on seeing this was the singular sense of desolation and dreariness that seemed all at once to come over her. The iron gates before her were a mass of rust; the portico, which had once been white, was weather-stained into a dismal grey; the stone, too, it was built of was scaling off in almost every place, and the fragments lay unheeded as they had fallen upon the ground. Here, amongst everything that spoke of the utmost care, was one object that spoke of entire forgetfulness and neglect. They approached in silence, and Miss Merton looked in through the bars of the rusty gate. The scene that met her eyes was one of greater desolation still. It was a circular plot of ground, fenced round by a low stone wall that was surmounted by spiked railings. It looked as though it might have been once a flower garden, but it was now a wilderness. Outside

its boundary rose the rare and beautiful trees of the happy tended shubberies. Inside were nettles, brambles, and long weedy grass. Nothing else was visible in this melancholy enclosure but three cypresses, apparently of various ages, the two smaller planted near together, the third, and by far the largest, standing apart by itself.

Miss Merton was quite at a loss what to make of the strange spot; and, as Laurence was feeling in his pocket for the key, she asked him if it had anything to do with breeding pheasants.

'Do you see what is written above the gate?' said Laurence, as he pointed to a dim inscription whose letters still retained a glimmer of fading gold; 'can you read it?

Neque harum, quas colis, arborum
Te, præter invisam cupressum,
Ulla brevem dominum sequetur.

"Of all these trees which you love so, the hated cypress only shall follow its master, and be faithful to him in his narrow house." But come—let us go inside, if you are not afraid of the long grass.'

They passed through the gate, which gave a low wail upon its hinges, and Miss Merton followed Laurence, knee-deep in grass and nettles, to the smallest of the three cypress-trees. There Laurence paused. At the foot of the tree Miss Merton saw a flat slab of marble, with something written upon it; and for the first time she felt certain that she must be in a place of graves.

'This,' said Laurence, pointing to the little cypress, 'was planted only five years ago, ten days before the poor old man died who now sleeps under it. This is my uncle's grave. Do you see the inscription?

*Omnis moriar, nullaue pars mei
Vitabit Libitinam.*

"I shall wholly die, and there is no part of me that will escape the Venus of death." That, and that alone, he chose to have written over him.'

Laurence spoke with some feeling, but Miss Merton was so much surprised that she hardly knew what response to make.

'And does nobody take any care of this place?' at last she said.

'No,' said Laurence. 'By his own last orders, nobody. But come—you must look at this too.' And he motioned her towards the neighbouring cypress.

At the foot of this, almost hidden by the long grass, Miss Merton saw something that surprised her still more strangely. It was the statue of a woman half reclining in a languid attitude on a block of hewn marble. The figure was full and beautiful, and the features of the face were singularly fine; but there was something in the general effect that struck one at the first moment as not pleasing. What slight drapery there was, was disposed meretriciously over the rounded limbs; on the arms were heavy bracelets; one of the hands held a half-inverted wine-cup, and the other was laid negligently on a heap of coins. But what jarred most upon the feelings was the face, with its perfect features. For a cold sneer was fixed upon the full mouth and the fine nostrils; and the eyes, with a leer of petulant sensuality, seemed to be fixed for ever upon the flat neighbouring gravestone.

'This cypress,' said Laurence, 'is much older than the other. It was planted twenty years ago; and twenty years ago the original of that statue was laid beneath it. She was one of those many nameless ladies—for, as you know, he completely exiled himself from society all the latter part of *his* life—who from time to time shared his fortunes at the house here. She was, too, by far the *most*

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

‘YES,’ said Mr. Luke still more solemnly, ‘if we only follow this out—this idea of the exclusion from our society of all vulgar and extraneous elements, we shall find we have done a great deal more than we may at first think. We shall have at once a free, and liberal, and untainted social and intellectual atmosphere, in which our thoughts, and feelings, and refinements, and ways of living, may develop themselves to the utmost, unimpeded. Lady Ambrose has certainly begun with hitting the right nail on the head.’

Could Lady Ambrose have been told, when she left London the afternoon before, that in another twenty-four hours she would be taking the lead in the construction of a Utopia, or ideal state of society, suggested by the writings of a Greek philosopher, she would have been utterly at a loss to know what the prophecy meant ; and had she known what it meant, she would certainly not have believed it. Indeed, as it was, she could hardly imagine that Mr. Luke was serious, and that he was not laughing at her ; so she said quickly and in a tone of self-defence,

‘Of course I know that there must be something more *than the mere exclusion* of vulgar people, Mr. Luke. We *must have religion, and all that, and*——’

'Ah!' exclaimed Mr. Luke, interrupting her with a grand wave of the hand; 'my dear Lady Ambrose, let us leave all that till by-and-by. Let us be content to begin with simpler matters first.'

'Let us begin with the flowers of life,' said Leslie, 'and when we have chosen these, let us trace them back to their roots.'

'I quite think,' said Miss Merton, 'that in a really good society—one that was perfectly good even in the superficial sense of the word—we should find, if we only had eyes enough, religion lurking somewhere, and everything else we want.'

'And so that's *your* view, my dear, is it?' said Lady Ambrose. 'Oh, then, I suppose since you, a Roman Catholic, think so, I may also.'

'Surely, too,' said Miss Merton, 'we must all know that nothing can be so bad, either for the pushers or the pushed, as the struggle of people to get into what they think is good society, not in the least because they care to be there, but merely because they care to be known to be there.'

Lady Ambrose, who perhaps felt unconsciously some small pricks of conscience here, again looked doubtful and said, 'Still if we really want to make a perfect state, this does not seem a very serious thing to begin with.'

'Listen,' exclaimed Laurence; 'let me read you something I have here—something of my uncle's, which I have just thought of. It is a short adaptation of Aristotle's *Ethics*.'

Lady Ambrose started. Hearing two words, one as long as *Aristotle*, and the other as unfamiliar as *Ethics*, she began to think that she had made the conversation serious with a vengeance. Indeed, the whole party, as well as herself, showed some signs of surprise.

'It is very short,' said Laurence, 'and I will only read a page or two. It is called "A system of Ethics, adapted from Aristotle, for the use of the English Nation." It was suggested to him—' (and this bewildered Lady Ambrose still more, though at the same time it gave her some gleam of hope), 'by a very rich vulgar family, who bought a place near here, and who much annoyed and amazed him by the great court they paid to him. This is the first chapter; it treats of "*The Summum Bonum, or The Moral End of Action.*" Listen—

'Ethics being the art and science of human action, as directed towards the chief good of life—that highest and final end, to which, if we think a little, we shall see all other ends are subordinate; it is evident that our first task must be, as our master Aristotle well says, to form a clear conception of what this end, the chief good, is.

'Now on this point Aristotle would seem to err. For he, following the common opinion of men, affirms the chief good to be happiness, holding the only question to be, in what does true happiness lie? And if he had been philosophising for savages, he would indeed have been in the right. But because savages and men in a state of nature have all one end of action, which is happiness, it by no means follows that the same is true of civilised nations, and that these may not have ends that are far higher. It is indeed evident that they have. And not this only, but that of such ends there is a very great variety. To describe and number these with anything like absolute accuracy is neither required nor admitted by the nature of the subject. But we shall be sufficiently near the truth if we say that there is a separate and characteristic chief good for each civilised nation—(quot gentes tot summa bona)—and that it is by this in each case that the national character is determined. A glance at the continent of

Europe will at once illustrate this, and suggest examples to us of these national chief goods. We shall see the Germans, for instance, following what is called Thought to its inmost recesses, the French what is called Life. We shall find accordingly that the chief good of the former nation, which is perhaps the highest of all, is the knowledge of the unknowable; whilst that of the latter, which is next to it in dignity, is the practice of the unmentionable. And so on with all the other nations; each will be found to have its separate chief good; and none of these to have the least connection with happiness. For us, however, who are English, and writing for English readers, it will be enough to concern ourselves simply with the chief good of the English.

'We shall discover this, in the same way as we did that of the French and Germans, in an examination of our own special national characteristic. First, however, we must be clear what this characteristic is; and here it will be well to take our neighbours' opinions of us as well as our own. If we inquire then in what light we present ourselves to the other European nations, we shall find that just as the Germans are known mainly as a profound nation and the French as a prurient nation, so are we, in like manner, now known as a vulgar nation. And as this view of us exactly tallies with our own, it appears evident that the special national characteristic of the English is vulgarity, and that the chief good of the English is the final end that is aimed at by the English vulgar classes.

'This we affirm to be social distinction, to their admiration and pursuit of which is due that cardinal moral quality which they call worldliness in themselves, and snobbishness in their friends and enemies. And if any object that to a great part of the nation social distinction

in its true sense is a thing unknown, and that to another part it is a thing that comes without being struggled for, and so in neither case can be the end of moral action, we shall answer them that to object this, is much the same as to argue that a peach-tree does not bear peaches because none are to be seen growing out of the roots ; or that there is no meaning in the Athanasian Creed because none is attached to it by the only people who use it ; or that there is no meaning in the dogma of the Pope's infallibility because its only possible meaning is repudiated by all those who defend it. For nothing will be found unless we seek it in its right place. And for the ethics of a nation we must look only in that part of the nation which is their proper sphere ; and that part is, as we have already shewn, the vulgar part. And should any still imagine that if we thus limit the scope of our observation, we shall not be able to treat the subject exhaustively, we shall remind him that the vulgar classes, though not yet co-extensive with the nation, are still rapidly becoming so, vulgarity ascending and descending with equal certainty ; since on the one hand it ruins all society into which it contrives to enter ; whilst it thrives itself, on the other hand, on all society that contrives to enter into it. To it therefore our whole study may be confined. Nor lastly (for it is well to anticipate every possible objection), is there any need that even thus we should study those classes that naturally possess social distinction, that we may so learn in what its real essence consists ; since, if we do but observe facts, we shall see that ignorance of the whole inner nature of good society is the chief characteristic of those who with most single-heartedness direct their lives towards getting into it. It will be enough then, without any further explanation, to lay it down that social distinction is the chief good, and the end of all moral action ; nor can the

Aristotelians say that this is in reality a mediate end, and sought for only because it leads to happiness ; since so far are men from seeking social distinction for the sake of happiness, that they are perpetually renouncing happiness for the sake of social distinction.'

'Capital, Mr. Laurence !' exclaimed Lady Ambrose, breaking into a low silvery laugh, as soon as Laurence had ended. 'And how true that is about those people who really ruin the society into which they contrive to push themselves !'

Lord Allen, who caught Miss Merton's eye at this moment, gave a very faint smile.

'So you see,' said Laurence, 'that you were quite right, Lady Ambrose, by instinctively beginning with exclusion.'

'Still,' said Allen, 'I'm afraid that all this is rather selfish. These people who want to be ^{so} smart, are, I dare say, not much the worse because of it. Indeed, myself, I rather like a good snob now and then.'

'Well,' said Laurence, 'let me read a few more paragraphs, and you will see. *'Such being the end,'* he goes on, *'of all moral action, virtue or morality is that state of mind which desires this end ; and virtuous or moral acts are those which help us on towards it, provided only that they are done with purpose. For acts done not with purpose, but by chance, are not to be held moral. Now the nature of purpose is well explained by Aristotle, when he says that its object is all such voluntary action as is the result of deliberation. And what then is the object of deliberation ? Let us consider that : for men, it is evident, do not deliberate about all matters alike ; since in addition to their continually not deliberating in cases when they ought, there are many matters about which deliberation is out of the question. Thus no one deliberates about what*

is in its nature immutable, as how to alter vulgarity of a people's member of Parliament; nor about necessary things, as how to alleviate the misery of the starving poor; nor about things of chance, as how to prevent the dissemination of cholera; nor, again, about remote things which do not concern us, as, to use a former instance, how to alleviate the misery of the starving poor; nor does anyone deliberate about impossible things, as how to check the poisonous adulteration of food; nor about things that are past and lost, as how to do anything for the glory of England; nor, lastly, do we deliberate about things we do not care about, as how to get that lost glory back again. Deliberation, then, only takes place about such matters as our own agency can effect, and which we wish it should effect. Virtue, therefore, being thus based on deliberation, is manifestly not one of those things that come to us by nature whether we will or no; but it is acquired by habit. The genus of moral virtue is a habit. But what special sort of habit? and how does it differ from all other habits? Let us consider this.

'We must remember, first, that it is the office of every virtue to perfect that of which it is the virtue. Thus it is the virtue of a modern London house to be as badly built as possible and not be seen to be so; it is the virtue of an insured ship not to appear unseaworthy before she does so to the crew as she is foundering; and it is the virtue of butcher's meat, groceries and so forth, not to appear unfit for human consumption. In the same way moral virtue, or the virtue of a man, is that which makes him appear to be one thing to the world, whilst in reality he is another. Such being the case, it is plain that in trying to be virtuous, we may, as in most other things, do too much, or too little; and what is right will be a mean lying between these two extremes. Now of means there are two kinds, the absolute

*and the relative, either of which we can find in anything that is continuous ; the former, as when we take the bisecting point in a straight line, which is for all men one and the same ; the latter, as when we take the mean point or thing with reference to ourselves, in which case it will differ with our different requirements. Thus, if three be too small a number, and seventy-five too great, simply as an arithmetical problem, we take thirty-nine to be the mean, which exceeds three by as much as it is exceeded by seventy-five ; but with reference to ourselves we cannot so decide. For thirty-nine articles of religion may be too few for the present Archbishop of Westminster, and three may be too many for the Dean. Or again between 100*l.* and 20*l.*, the mean with regard to the matter itself would be 60*l.*, but with regard to ourselves, not so. For 60*l.* would be too little to offer to a cook, and too much to offer to a curate. So in like manner that equality which constitutes moral virtue is not the absolute, but the relative mean. Moral virtue, then, we shall define to be a certain state, or habit of purpose, conforming in action to the relative mean, and adjusted to that mean as the worldly or snobbish man would adjust it. At this point we shall pause a moment to make a very slight change in the accepted terminology of the subject. We have hitherto spoken of the virtue of the vulgar classes as being a mean. We consider, however, that our language will be less ambiguous, if we take another form of the same word, and agree to call it a meanness. Moral virtue, then, is a meanness lying between two vices, its extremes ; the one vice being that of excess, the other that of defect. Thus it is possible for a habit of mind to be so unrestrained and vehement, that the acts it produces at once betray their motives and obtrude them on the observer ; it is possible for it, also, on the other hand, to be so weak and nerveless as never to produce any acts at all. For*

‘Yes,’ said Lady Ambrose, ‘this is just what I like. Come, Mr. Luke, suppose you were to tell us.’

‘Suppose,’ said Mr. Luke with an august wave of his hand, ‘instead of that we ask Mr. Laurence to tell us. No one can do so better than he. I, Lady Ambrose, have perhaps grown something too much of a specialist to be able to put these things in a sufficiently popular way.’

‘Ah,’ said Mr. Herbert, ‘this is really nice. I shall like to listen to this. But you must allow me to be merely a listener, and not ask me for instruction. I assure you I am here altogether to be instructed.’

Laurence, with some diffidence, assented to what was asked of him; and there was a general rustling on all sides of the party settling themselves down more luxuriously on the grass. Every influence of the summer afternoon conspired to make all take kindly to the topic—the living airy whisper of the leaves overhead, the wandering scents of the flowers that the breeze just made perceptible, the musical splash of the fountain in its quiet restlessness, the luxury of the mossy turf as soft as sleep or rose-leaves, and a far faint murmur of church-bells that now and then invaded the ear gently, like a vague appealing dream. Mr. Saunders even was caressed by his flattered senses into peacefulness; the high and dry light of the intellect ceased to scintillate in his eyes; the spirit of progress condescended to take a temporary doze.

CHAPTER II

‘AND now, Mr. Laurence,’ said Lady Ambrose, ‘begin at the beginning, please, and don’t do as Lord Kennington did at the Eton and Harrow match the other day—go talking to me about “overs,” and “long-stops,” and things

like that, before I was even quite sure of the difference between "out" and "in."

'Of course,' Laurence began, smiling with a little pre-fatory shyness, 'we can all understand the difference between a coarse common rustic palate, like that of the burly farmer, for instance, who just enjoys food in a brute way when he is hungry, and drink so long as it is spirituous at all times; and the palate of the true epicure, that is sensitive to taste as the nicest ear is to music, and can discriminate perfectly all the subtle semitones and chords of flavour. Well, transfer this image from the mouth to the mind, and there's the whole thing in a nutshell. There is culture and no culture. A person is really cultivated when he can taste not only the broad flavours of life—gulping its joys and sorrows down, either with a vulgar grimace of disgust, or an equally vulgar hearty voracity; but when with a delicate self-possession he appreciates all the subtler taste of things, when he discriminates between joy and joy, between sorrow and sorrow, between love and love, between career and career; discerning in all incidents and emotions their beauty, their pathos, their absurdity, or their tragedy, as the case may be.'

'You mean, then,' said Miss Merton, 'that a man of the highest culture is a sort of emotional *bon vivant*?'

'That surely is hardly a fair way—' began Laurence.

'Excuse me, my dear Laurence,' broke in Mr. Luke, in his most magnificent of manners, 'it is perfectly fair—it is admirably fair. Emotional *bon vivant*!' he exclaimed. 'I thank Miss Merton for teaching me that word! for it may remind us all,' Mr. Luke continued, drawing out his words slowly, as if he liked the taste of them, 'how near our view of the matter is to that of a certain Galilean peasant—of whom Miss Merton has perhaps heard—who

described the highest culture by just the same metaphor, as a hunger and a thirst after righteousness. Our notion of it differs only from his, from the *Zeitgeist* having made it somewhat wider.'

Miss Merton, in her inmost soul, did anything but return Mr Luke's compliment, and consider his comment on her words as either admirably or perfectly fair. However, she held her peace. The thoughts of Lady Ambrose had been flowing in a slightly different direction.

'But what I want to ask,' she said, 'is this. I want to know why it is that whenever one hears it said, "Oh, So-and-so is a very *cultivated* person," one always expects to find him—well, almost half professional as it were, or at least able to talk of nothing but music, or painting, or books? I mean a man who's *merely* a cultivated person doesn't seem ever to be a man of the world, or to be much good in society, except when one wants him to talk on his own subjects—I hate people myself who *have* subjects—and then, ten to one, he doesn't know when to leave off. Now, Mr. Laurence, I see you want to interrupt me ; but do let me say my say. A right amount of culture is of course delightful, and personally, I don't much care for people who haven't got it. But too much of it—I'm sure, Mr. Laurence, you must agree with me at heart—is a mistake. And that, you know, is all I mean about it ! nothing more than that.'

'Ah,' said Laurence, smiling, 'I think I see what it is. You *will* look on culture as some special kind of accomplishment or taste, like music ; and you think that in some special way it is bound up with books ; and books you look upon as something special also, beginning and ending with themselves ; and, unless I am much mistaken, you think that the more books a man has read, 'he more cultivated you may safely call him.'

‘Not all books,’ said Lady Ambrose in an
‘Of course I don’t mean trashy novels, and
I don’t mean blue-books, or books of history.’

‘But what I want first of all to impress on you,’ said Laurence, ‘is that whatever its relation to books may be, culture is by no means a bookish thing, or a thing that ought to be less in place at Hurlingham than at the South Kensington Museum. Nor is it in any sense a hobby, or a special taste, to be gratified at the expense of anything else. Instead of that, it is the education of all our tastes, of all our powers of enjoying life ; and, so far from its being a thing for recluses, and a substitute for society, it is only when naturalised in the best society that it can at all do itself justice in expressing itself outwardly, or even exist in any completeness inwardly.’

Lady Ambrose smiled, and looked more interested, and began to give Laurence her most intelligent attention.

‘Still,’ Laurence went on, ‘culture and books have a good deal to do with one another ; and since they are so bound up together in your mind, let us try to see at once what the relation really is. Let us begin, then, with that part of culture which in this sense is most bound up with books—most bound up because it cannot be got without them ; the part of culture, I mean, that comes from the knowledge of the past—from a knowledge of history, in short, or parts of history.’

Lady Ambrose here took Laurence fairly aback by the way in which she repeated the word ‘History !’

‘Well, judging from the results I have seen,’ she said, with an amount of decision in her voice that was positively startling, ‘I cannot say, Mr. Laurence, that I agree with you. And I think that on this subject I have a right to speak.’

the man who had robbed him thus was a mere Philistine—a mere man of science, who was without even a smattering of Greek or Hebrew, and who thought sensori-motor nerves and spontaneous generation more important subjects than Marcion's Gospel or the Psalms of David. For once in his life Mr. Luke was for the moment completely silenced. Laurence, however, somewhat soothed him by replying to him, not to Mr. Stockton,

'Yes, I believe I was wrong after all ; and that true culture will really prevent us from looking on life as a mere mockery.'

Mr. Luke was going to have answered ; but, worse even than Mr. Stockton's, Mr. Saunders's hated accents now got the start of him.

'One word more,' Mr. Saunders exclaimed, 'one plain word, if you will allow me. All this talk about Religion, Poetry, Morality, implies this—or it implies nothing—the recognition of some elements of inscrutable mystery in our lives and conduct ; and to every mystery, to all mystery, science is the sworn, the deadly foe. What she is daily more and more branding into man's consciousness is, that nothing is inscrutable that can practically concern man. Use, pleasure, self-preservation—on these everything depends ; on these rocks of ages are all rules of conduct founded : and now that we have dug down to these foundations, what an entirely changed fabric of life shall we build upon them. Right and wrong, I again say, are entirely misleading terms ; and the superstition that sees an unfathomable gulf yawning between them is the great bar to all healthful progress.'

'And I say, on the contrary,' said Laurence, replying *very suavely* to Mr. Saunders's vehemence, 'that it is on the recognition of this mysterious and unfathomable gulf

that the whole of the higher pleasures of life depend—and the higher vicious pleasures as much as, if not more than, the virtuous.'

Lady Ambrose started at this.

'I am not vicious,' said Mr. Saunders snappishly. 'When I call pleasure the one criterion of action, I am thinking of very different pleasures from what you think I mean.'

'What is Mr. Saunders's notion of the most passionate pleasure?' said Mrs. Sinclair bewitchingly.

'I agree with my great forerunner Hobbes,' said Mr. Saunders, 'that the strongest of all pleasures are those arising from the gratification of curiosity; and he is the real ethical philosopher who subordinates all other appetites to this, like Bacon, who lost his life through pursuing a scientific experiment, or'—he said, pausing to think of another example—

'Like Bluebeard's wives?' enquired Mrs. Sinclair naïvely. 'I'm afraid I never give my husband his highest pleasure; for I never let him,' she added in a regretful whisper, 'open my letters, although I read all his. But, Mr. Saunders,' she said, 'if you are so fond of curiosity, you must have some mystery to excite it.'

'Yes,' said Mr. Saunders, 'but mystery is a fox for us to hunt and shoot; not a God to hunt and shoot us.'

'Fancy,' exclaimed Lady Ambrose in horror, 'shooting a fox! what sacrilege!'

This remark, so entirely spontaneous, and so entirely unexpected, produced a general laugh, in which all joined but Mr. Saunders himself, and Mr. Herbert.

'Well,' said Laurence at length, when the chorus had subsided, 'may I read a certain letter of my uncle's to myself, which is printed in this very book I have here? It was running in my mind just now, and is about the

very matter we were speaking of—the connection of religions, of Christian morality, with all the higher pleasures of life.’

‘Very good,’ said Mr. Saunders. ‘Read what you please. I can only say that I have at this moment in my portmanteau an analysis I have made of all the Christian moral sentiments, in which I trace every one of them to such disgusting or paltry origins as shall at once rob them of all their pestilent *prestige*. I begin with the main root, the great first parent of all these evils, the conception of God, which I show may have arisen in seventy-three different ways, each one more commonplace than the other. By-and-by, if you will not fear to confront the document, I will show it to you.’

Mr. Luke meanwhile had seen his way to bringing Mr. Stockton’s true ignorance home to him, and had been regretting to him, in tones of insidious confidence, that hardly enough stress had been laid just now on the necessity of really wide reading—‘an intimacy,’ said Mr. Luke, ‘with the great literatures of the world—a knowledge and comparison of the best things that have been said and thought, in all the various ages, on the great questions of life, without which,’ he added, ‘as you and I know, that discrimination between right and wrong that we were speaking of just now, can never be anything more than a make-believe.’ Nor did Mr. Luke seem at all aware, as he was thus proceeding, that Laurence had found his place, and had already begun to read, as follows :

‘As I grow old, my dear Otho, I am coming to think over many things that I have hitherto thought too little about, and, amongst others, the great mystery of Christianity.’

At this point, however, Laurence and Mr. Luke were both interrupted by an entirely unforeseen event.

CHAPTER IV

LAURENCE had just got to the end of the first sentence, and Mr. Luke at the same time was just reminding Mr. Stockton with some unction how impossible it was for us to value properly that curious mixture of trumpery and elevation, the 'Apocalypse' of John, unless we compared it with a very kindred work, the 'Pastor' of Hermas, when a servant startled Laurence by announcing in his ear the arrival of the vicar of the parish.

Everyone in dismay looked ; and there, standing a pace away in the background, the stranger was. He was an old man, very tall and spare, with an ascetic aspect, but with a carriage dignified though slightly stooping, and with severe, piercing eyes. The sudden embarrassment, however, which his apparition seemed to cause the party was relieved somewhat by Laurence's taking him aside as if for some private conversation, and also by another arrival of a far more genial nature—that of servants with tea, piles of strawberries, iced coffee, and champagne cup. Mr. Rose at once bought himself golden opinions of Lady Grace by helping her page, a pretty boy with light curling hair, to arrange some tumblers on the grass. Mr. Stockton felt his spirits suddenly rise, and began asking Lady Violet what she thought of their new Republic as far as they had got with it.

'I don't know,' she answered petulantly. 'As far as I can see, you want everyone to read a great many books and to have only one opinion. For my part, I hate people who do the one, and a society that does the other.'

'What a charming girl Lady Violet is !' said Mr.

Stockton to Lady Grace as he stood by the tea table. 'Such penetration! *such* vivacity! *such* originality!'

'What beautiful sermons he does preach, to be sure!' murmured Lady Ambrose.

'Who? Who?' enquired several voices.

'Why, Dr. Seydon,' said Lady Ambrose. 'Don't you know him? Have you never heard him in London—the gentleman with Mr. Laurence? See, he is coming back again to have some tea.'

It was indeed but too true. Mr. Luke's face in especial grew very blank. Mr. Saunders clenched his fist—a small one.

Dr. Seydon's face, on the contrary, wore what for it was a really gracious smile. He was mindful of how upon his arrival he had overheard the words 'Apocalypse' and 'mystery of Christianity.'

As Laurence introduced him into the circle Lady Ambrose at once claimed acquaintance with him, and made room for him at her side.

'I am sorry,' he said, looking round him with a singularly dignified, almost condescending courteousness, 'to disturb in this way your Sunday's reading. But I can but stay a few moments. I shall not interrupt you long.'

'We have been talking a good deal,' said Laurence, 'about the signs of the times.'

'And,' said Lady Ambrose eagerly, feeling herself near a friend, 'about all this wicked infidelity and irreligion that is so much about in the world now.'

'Ah, yes,' said Dr. Seydon slowly, and with a sudden frown, 'it is true, unhappily, that there is, or has been, much of that in our century. But what remains is confined, I imagine (and that is sad enough, God knows), to the half-educated artisans in our large towns,

whom the Church in former years, alas ! relaxed her hold on. For I fear I cannot deny that we, in this matter, are not wholly guiltless. The Church, we may depend upon it, has much to answer for.'

'Perfectly true, my dear sir ! perfectly true,' exclaimed Mr. Luke, who could never resist assenting to this sentiment.

Dr. Seydon darted a quick glance at Mr. Luke, as if he were anything but pleased at finding himself so readily agreed with.

'But,' he went on, 'matters are fast assuming a more satisfactory appearance ; and the great advance made in true education, and the liberal spirit that this brings with it, cannot fail to lead to that great change in our position that we so much desiderate.'

'Quite so,' said Mr. Luke. 'The true reading of ecclesiastical history——'

'Ah !' exclaimed Dr. Seydon, holding up his forefinger, 'exactly so. You have hit upon the right thing there.' ('Good gracious !' thought Mr. Luke, astounded at this patronising compliment, 'I should think I had.') 'Could we but get both the parties,' Dr. Seydon went on, addressing Mr. Luke across Lady Ambrose, 'to understand fairly the history of the important era, the matter would, I think, be as good as settled. You see,' he said, turning to Lady Ambrose, 'if the Easterns will merely face steadily the pregnant fact that Michael Cerularius, in his first letter to Leo IX., in 1053, took absolutely no exception to any one point in Western doctrine, but simply to certain secondary points of discipline, they will see that the gulf that separates us is very slight when viewed by the clearer light of modern thought. I think,' he added, 'that I saw Lady Ambrose's name amongst the subscribers to the Eastern Church Union Association.'

'Oh yes,' said Lady Ambrose, 'certainly. I do so wish that some union could be brought about. For the Greek Church, you know, certainly have the Apostolical Succession ; and then, if we were only joined with them, the Roman Catholics could never deny our orders—not,' she added, with a most cordial smile to Dr. Seydon, 'that I don't myself believe implicitly in them, as it is.'

A rapid frown gathered itself on Dr. Seydon's brow.

'The denial of them,' he said severely, 'hurts the Romanists far more than it does us. As to the Greeks, what I was going to say was this. Let them just cast their eyes back so far as the tenth century, and they will see—and pray mark this, all of you,' he said, holding up his forefinger, and shaking it several times, 'for this is very important—I say the Greeks will see, unless they are determined to close their eyes, that at the time of the great rupture with the West they did actually acknowledge the entire soundness of our confession of faith ; the main point they objected to, and which they thought fit ground then for separation, being that the Western Church did not sing Alleluiah in Lent, and that it used in the Lord's Supper unleavened bread, which, Nicetas Pectoratus contended in an elaborate treatise, was dead bread, and could not therefore be either supersubstantial or consubstantial to us. It has been the fault of the Easterns, in fact, to be ever over-subtle, and to fall into those excesses of human wisdom which are foolishness with God. Isaac the Armenian, for instance, wrote a book to prove his countrymen in heresy for twenty-nine different reasons, of which the two most important are these—that *they did not blow on baptised persons, and that they made their consecrated oils of rapeseed and not of olives.* But two causes seem to me to be now working together, under God, to put the Easterns into a more becoming

spirit, and to make them more heartily willing to join us. These are—I have mentioned them in the third volume of my “History of the *Filioque* Clause”—first, that the genuine Greek blood is becoming daily more adulterated, and the Greek intellect losing therefore its old subtlety; and secondly, that the political disturbance that now seems imminent in the East will distract them from abusing such subtlety as they still possess. We shall therefore meet on the broad ground of our fundamental agreements; and once let the moral influence of the two churches, the Greek and English, be mutually augmented by an open union, in another five years, I imagine, we shall have heard the last of infidelity, in England at least, or indeed of Romanism either.’

‘Now, that’s the sort of man,’ said Lady Ambrose, as soon as Dr. Seydon had departed, ‘that I should like to have for my clergyman in our new Republic.’

‘Seydon!’ exclaimed Mr. Luke, ‘so that is he, is it? I thought I remembered that face of his. Of course—I remember now, seeing that his college had given this living to him.’

‘It was he,’ said Laurence to Miss Merton, ‘who, some years ago, prevented Dr. Jenkinson being made a bishop, which he said, though it might be a compliment to learning, would be a grievous insult to God.’

‘And so, Lady Ambrose,’ said Mr. Stockton, ‘you would like Dr. Seydon for a clergyman! Well, in our ideal society you would be able to have any clergyman you chose—any religion you chose—any which most satisfied your own conscience.’

‘Oh, very well,’ said Lady Ambrose, ‘if it would not interfere with one’s religion in any way, I think all this culture and enlightenment most delightful.’

‘It will bind us to nothing,’ said Mr. Stockton

‘except to a recognition of nobleness, of morality, of poetry. What Mr. Laurence has offered to read to us is an account of how all of these are bound up in religion in *my* sense of the word.’

‘Come, Mr. Laurence,’ said Lady Ambrose, ‘please go on. It is wonderful,’ she added in a solemn whisper, ‘how even bad men, like old Mr. Laurence, know at heart how it is really best to be good, and to believe in true religion.’

‘*As I grow old, my dear Otho,*’ Laurence again began to read, ‘*I am coming to think over many things that I have hitherto thought too little about, and, amongst others, the great mystery of Christianity. I am coming to see that, from a too superficial way of looking at it, I have done this religion a gross injustice, and have blindly failed to recognise how much of all that we hold most precious in life is dependent on its severe and unbending systems of theology and morals. It will perhaps strike you that it is rather late in the day for me to pay my tribute to these, now that the world at large is theoretically denying the former of them, and is practically forgetting the latter. But it is this very fact that induces me to speak out—the growing licence and the growing scepticism of modern society. I wish to raise my voice against the present state of things, and to warn the world that if it goes on much longer as it is going on now, it will soon have irremediably ruined all the finer and more piquant flavours of life, and that soon there will be actually nothing left to give rational zest to this poor pitiful existence of ours.*

‘*You know what an admirer I have always been, in many ways, of the ancients, and how, in many ways, I think modern civilisation barbarous as compared with theirs. I have not changed this opinion. I have only come lately to understand what it means. The charm of*

ancient life lies mainly in its form. In essence, the life open to us is, as I fully see now, infinitely superior. And to what is this superiority due? Simply to Christianity. It came with Christianity, and it will also go with it.

'I am not mad, Otho. Listen to me a little longer, my boy, and you will see my meaning.

'To begin, then—just consider the one matter of humour. Compare the ancient humourists with the modern. Think for a moment of Lucian, of Aristophanes, of Plautus, of Petronius, of Horace; then think of Erasmus, Swift, Cervantes, Voltaire, Sterne. Does not the mere memory of the two sets of names bring home to you what a gulf in this matter there is between the ancient world and the modern? Is not the modern humour an altogether different thing from the ancient—broader and deeper beyond comparison or measurement? The humour of the ancients could raise a laugh; true—that is just what it could raise, and a laugh could express all the feelings raised by it. Think of the intolerable vulgarity of Homer's gods, who "laughed consumedly" at Vulcan, as he waited on them,—why? because he was lame. The sense of humour on Olympus was about equal to what it would be now in a country lawyer's parlour. Think of Horace, who saw in a dull pun on two proper names, a joke so excellent that he wrote a whole satire in honour of it. It is true that Juvenal showed a somewhat finer sense, when he said that when Fortune was pleased to be facetious, she made a nouveau riche; Petronius, perhaps, was even in advance of Juvenal. But ancient humour at its best was a shallow thing. It meant little. It was like the bright sparkle on a brawling stream, hardly ankle-deep. But our modern humour is like the silent snake-like lights in a still water, that go coiling down into depths unfathomable, as it lures our thoughts onwards to the contemplation of endless issues.

*Whoso is chaste of spirit utterly,
May gather there the leaves and fruits and flowers—
The unchaste, never.
But thou, O goddess, and dearest love of mine—*

(‘I don’t at all approve of this,’ murmured Lady Ambrose.)

*Take, and about thine hair
This anadem entwine—
Take, and for my sake wear,
Who am more to thee than other mortals are,
Whose is the holy lot
As friend with friend to walk and talk with thee,
Hearing thy sweet mouth’s music in mine ear,
But thee beholding not.¹*

‘Ah, they are sweet verses,’ said Mr. Rose; ‘a little too ascetic, perhaps, to be quite Greek. They are from Euripides, I see—the address to Artemis of Hippolytus.’

‘Yes,’ said Laurence; ‘I don’t think I ever wrote any original poetry.’

‘It’s exactly like Mr. Laurence—that bit,’ whispered Mrs. Sinclair.

‘And now,’ said Mr. Rose, ‘as I suppose we shall ere long be all going to dress for dinner, I will go, Mr. Laurence, if you will let me, and examine that other volume you spoke of, of your uncle’s Miscellanies.’

Mr. Rose moved slowly away; and as he did so, there came the sound of the distant dressing-bell, which warned the whole party that it was time to be following his example.

¹ Eur. Hipp. v. 69-85.

BOOK IV

CHAPTER I

No proposal could have been happier than Lady Grace's, of the garden banquet in the pavilion. It seemed to the guests, when they were all assembled there, that the lovely summer's day was going to close with a scene from fairyland. The table itself, with its flowers, and glowing fruit, and its many-coloured Venetian glass, shone and gleamed and sparkled, in the evening light, that was turning outside to a cool mellow amber; and above, from the roof, in which the dusk was already darkness, hung china lamps, in the shape of green and purple grape-clusters, looking like luminous fruits stolen from Aladdin's garden. The pavilion, open on all sides, was supported on marble pillars, that were almost hidden in red and white roses. Behind, the eye rested on great tree-trunks and glades of rich foliage; and before, it would pass over turf and flowers, till it reached the sea beyond, on which, in another hour, the faint silver of the moonlight would begin to tremble.

There was something in the whole scene that was at once calming and exhilarating; and nearly all present seemed to feel in some measure this double effect of it. *Dr. Jenkinson* had been quite restored by an afternoon's nap; and his face was now all a-twinkle with a free

the art of a *renaissance*. For by the power of such art, all that was beautiful, strong, heroic, or tender in the past—all the actions, passions, faiths, aspirations of the world, that lie so many fathom deep in the years—float upwards to the tranquil surface of the present, and make our lives like what seems to me one of the loveliest things in nature, the iridescent film on the face of a stagnant water. Yes; the past is not dead unless we choose that it shall be so. Christianity itself is not dead. There is "nothing of it that doth fade," but turns "into something rich and strange," for us to give a new tone to our lives with. And, believe me,' Mr. Rose went on, gathering earnestness 'that the happiness possible in such conscious periods is the only true happiness. Indeed, the active periods of the world were not really happy at all. We only fancy them to have been so by a pathetic fallacy. Is the hero happy during his heroism? No, but after it, when he sees what his heroism was, and reads the glory of it in the eyes of youth or maiden.'

'All this is very poor stuff—*very* poor stuff,' murmured Dr. Jenkinson, whose face had become gradually the very picture of crossness.

'Do you mean, Mr. Rose,' said Miss Merton, with a half humorous, half incredulous smile, 'that we never value religion till we have come to think it nonsense?'

'Not nonsense—no,' exclaimed Mr. Rose in gentle horror; 'I only mean that it never lights our lives so beautifully as when it is leaving them like the evening sun. It is in such periods of the world's life that art springs into being in its greatest splendour. Your Raphael, Miss Merton, who painted you your "dear Madonnas," was a luminous cloud in the sunset sky of *the Renaissance*,—a cloud that took its fire from a faith *that was sunk or sinking*.'

'I'm afraid that the faith is not quite sunk yet,' said Miss Merton, with a slight sudden flush in her cheeks, and with just the faintest touch of suppressed anger.

Mr. Saunders, Mr. Stockton, Mr. Storks, and Mr. Luke all raised their eyebrows.

'No,' said Mr. Rose, 'such cyclic sunsets are happily apt to linger.'

'Mr. Rose,' exclaimed Lady Ambrose, with her most gracious of smiles, 'of course everyone who has ears must know that all this is very beautiful, but I am positively so stupid that I haven't been quite able to follow it all.'

'I will try to make my meaning clearer,' he said, in a brisker tone. 'I often figure to myself an unconscious period and a conscious one, as two women—one an untamed creature with embrowned limbs native to the air and the sea; the other marble-white and swan-soft, couched delicately on cushions before a mirror, and watching her own supple reflection gleaming in the depths of it. On the one is the sunshine and the sea-spray. The wind of Heaven and her unbound hair are playmates. The light of the sky is in her eyes; on her lips is a free laughter. We look at her, and we know that she is happy. *We* know it, mark me; but *she* knows it not. Turn, however, to the other, and all is changed. Outwardly, there is no gladness there. Her dark, gleaming eyes open depth within depth upon us, like the circles of a new Inferno. There is a clear, shadowy pallor on her cheek. Only her lips are scarlet. There is a sadness—a languor, even in the grave tendrils of her heavy hair, and in each changing curve of her bosom as she breathes or sighs.'

'What a very odd man Mr. Rose is!' said Lady Ambrose in a loud whisper. 'He always seems to be
N 2

of everybody as if they had no clothes on. And does he mean by this that we ought to be always in the dumps ?'

'Yes,' Mr. Rose was meanwhile proceeding, his voice again growing visionary, 'there is no eagerness, no action there ; and yet all eagerness, all action is known to her as the writing on an open scroll ; only, as she reads, even in the reading of it, action turns into emotion, and eagerness into a sighing memory. Yet such a woman really may stand symbolically for us as the patroness and the lady of all gladness, who makes us glad in the only way now left us. And not only in the only way, but in the best way—the way of ways. Her secret is self-consciousness. She knows that she is fair ; she knows, too, that she is sad ; but she sees that sadness is lovely, and so sadness turns to joy. Such a woman may be taken as a symbol not of our architecture only, but of all the æsthetic surroundings with which we shall shelter and express our life. Such a woman do I see whenever I enter a ritualistic church——'

'I know,' said Mrs. Sinclair, 'that very peculiar people do go to such places ; but, Mr. Rose,' she said with a look of appealing enquiry, 'I thought they were generally rather over-dressed than otherwise ?'

'The imagination,' said Mr. Rose, opening his eyes in grave wonder at Mrs. Sinclair, 'may give her what garb it chooses. Our whole city, then—the city of our new Republic—will be in keeping with this spirit. It will be the architectural and decorative embodiment of the most educated longings of our own times after order and loveliness and delight, whether of the senses or the *imagination*. It will be, as it were, a resurrection of the *past*, in response to the longing and the passionate regret of the *present*. It will be such a resurrection as took

place in Italy during its greatest epoch, only with this difference——’

‘You seem to have forgotten trade and business altogether,’ said Dr. Jenkinson. ‘I think, however rich you intend to be, you will find that they are necessary.’

‘Yes, Mr. Rose, you’re not going to deprive us of all our shops, I hope?’ said Lady Ambrose.

‘Because, you know,’ said Mrs. Sinclair, with a soft maliciousness, ‘we can’t go without dresses altogether, Mr. Rose. And if I were there,’ she continued plaintively, ‘I should want a bookseller to publish the scraps of verse—poetry, as I am pleased to call it—that I am always writing.’

‘Pooh!’ said Mr. Rose, a little annoyed, ‘we shall have all that somewhere, of course; but it will be out of the way, in a sort of Piræus, where the necessary *κάπηλοι*——’

‘A sort of what?’ said Lady Ambrose.

‘Mr. Rose merely means,’ said Donald Gordon, ‘that there must be good folding-doors between the offices and the house of life; and that the servants are not to be seen walking about in the pleasure-grounds.’

‘Yes,’ said Mr. Rose, ‘exactly so.’

‘Well, then,’ said Lady Ambrose, ‘I quite agree with you, Mr. Rose; and if wishing were only having, I’ve not the least doubt that we should all of us be going back to Mr. Rose’s city to-morrow, instead of to London, with its carts, and cabs, and smoke, and all its thousand-and-one drawbacks. I’m sure,’ she said, turning to Miss Merton, ‘you would, my dear, with all your taste.’

‘It certainly,’ said Miss Merton, smiling, ‘all sounds very beautiful. All I am afraid of is that we should *not be quite worthy of it.*’

‘Nay,’ said Mr. Rose, ‘but the very point is that v

A sudden sigh here escaped from some one. Mr. Luke looked round.

'Ah,' exclaimed Mr. Stockton, 'what a description of prayer! What a noble, what a magnificent description!'

The fashion of Mr. Luke's countenance changed. He stopped short, he would not proceed a word farther. His whole quotation had been ruined, he felt, by this odious interruption.

'I never supposed,' said Miss Merton, who thought Mr. Luke pausing that she might give in her acquiescence, 'I never supposed St. Augustine's views quite final upon all matters. I dare say there are some things that even I could have taught him.'

She smiled as she said this; but there was a little embarrassment in her tone which was perceived by Laurence, and which brought him at once to her rescue.

'I,' he said, 'think the contrast Mr. Luke has drawn even stronger than he has made it. I by no means think that Augustine was afraid of the pleasures of light and sight as they were enjoyed by Wordsworth; for I can hardly fancy that he could have had the least conception of them. They seem to me a new and peculiar heritage, which *we* may all more or less have part in; but which by former ages were undreamt of, not rejected. I often myself look back on a certain early walk I took one spring morning in these gardens—amongst the very trees and flower-beds we are now looking out upon. The fresh softness that was in the air, and all the wandering scents, like dreams or prophecies of summers gone or coming, and the wet light glistening on the dewy leaves, seemed to go at once to the soul—to "melt into me," as *into Wordsworth's herdsman*. Once I surprised myself *stooping under a dripping bough*, to look upwards at a

yellow flower, and watch it lonely against a background of blue sky ; and once I started to find myself quite lost in staring at a red rock, gleaming amongst shrubs and ivy, which a plant of periwinkle spangled with a constellation of purple stars. The colour, the shape, the smell of every leaf and flower—each seemed to touch me like a note of music ; and the bloom of morning mist was over everything.’

‘ Ah,’ said Mrs. Sinclair, her dark eyes gleaming in the moonlight, ‘ how those spring mornings sometimes make one sick with longing ! ’

‘ Yes,’ said Laurence, ‘ with longing—with a vague longing ; not always, I am afraid, with thanksgiving or with praise. But I think the feeling in all its moods is the same in some ways. It is a mixing together of outward and inward things—our whole inward lives passing out of us into Nature ; Nature melting into us, and growing part of our inward lives, so that all our hopes and fears and memories become embodied things, touching us in scents of flowers, in the breath of the air, in the sparkle of water, or mixing, like Hamadryads, their beings with the trees. Now, could I have described such feelings as these—my own state of mind during my morning walk—to St. Augustine, he would not have understood me. He would have thought me raving. And my case is not peculiar. These feelings are no private things of my own. They belong to our whole age. And of this,’ Laurence went on, ‘ you may see a very curious proof in a part of our modern literature, which as literature is least successful. I mean, a certain class of novels : not the works of the greater novelists, still less the works of the professional novel-manufacturers ; not these, but a sort of production almost peculiar to our own time—the novels of amateurs, wh

have such a true and burning admiration of the morally beautiful, it will be quite impossible that woman's life shall not be seen to be what it really is—a thing as capable as men's of high aims, and independent purposes, and not, as it were, entirely sunk in theirs. I, Mr. Luke, in face of such a public opinion as you speak of, should have little fear for our cause. I think, under God, it would prosper there.'

'Of course it would,' said Mr. Luke. 'If culture enables us to detect beauty and to prize it, what should it enable us to prize more than womanhood, with all its exquisite capabilities developed to their utmost? Life has no greater ornament than cultured womanhood.'

'Except cultured manhood,' said Lady Grace, unconsciously giving Mr. Luke a slight wound by her generous and unexpected return of his royal compliment. 'Ah,' she sighed to herself with a look at Mr. Luke, 'and he does not believe in God—or thinks he does not! I suppose it must needs be that offences come; but I wish they did not come by such good men. However—I trust that it is all really for the best. And then—there is no such thing as eternal punishment. One may be thankful to feel sure of that.'

'I am afraid you will think me very troublesome,' said Mr. Herbert, who had been talking to Laurence in a low tone for the last few minutes, 'but there is one question more I should like to ask you. I want to know if you, who see the many delicate beauties of life, and the countless positions it may be viewed from,—I want to know if you will teach the lower, the commoner classes, who look up to you as models, to quote poetry, and to be enquiring and sceptical also?'

'I hope not, indeed,' broke in Lady Ambrose with vigour; 'and as to our being their models, Mr. Herbert,

I'm sure you can't mean that. It seems to me one of the very worst things in these times that they will take us for their models. However, I think it is really a good deal our fault, and that it comes very much from our giving our maids so many of our old clothes to wear. That sort of thing puts notions into their heads. Now, here at any rate is *one* reform that is implied in our Republic ;—I don't like that word *Republic*, by the way,—we must put a stop to all this imitation of ourselves. Isn't that so, Mr. Laurence ?'

'Thank you, Lady Ambrose,' said Mr. Herbert, rising, 'thank you. I think it altogether a wise—nay, more than wise, an essential thing, to keep these wide speculations from spreading beyond the only circles that they are really fitted for. I have to go indoors now, as I have a few matters to arrange to-night ; but I am much obliged to you all for what you have taught me about culture, and enlightenment, and society, as it ought to be.'

'The difficulty is,' said Lady Ambrose, as Mr. Herbert was walking away, 'how to keep all this thought, and so forth, to ourselves. One thing I'm quite certain of, that we really do a great deal of harm without thinking of it by the way in which we speak our minds out before servants, and that sort of people, without in the least considering what may come of it. Now, what do you think of this, as a plan for making our ideal state a really good and contented place?—the upper classes should speak a different language from the lower classes. Of course we should be able to speak theirs, but they would not be able to speak ours. And then, you see, they would never hear us talk, or read our books, or get hold of our ideas ; which, after all, is what does all the mischief. And yet,' said Lady Ambrose with a sigh, 'that's not the

great difficulty. The great difficulty would be about daughters and younger sons, and how to give them all enough to keep them going in the world. However, this we can talk of in a minute. But'—here Lady Ambrose put her hand in her pocket, and a sound was heard as of rustling paper.

'I really do believe,' said Laurence, 'that Lady Ambrose *has* written a novel, although she denies it; and there she is going to read a bit of it now, as a specimen of her own culture.'

'No,' said Lady Ambrose, 'really and truly. And if I had written a novel, Mr. Laurence, I should not have the cruelty to inflict it upon you. No; but what I have here,' she said at last, producing a manuscript, 'though it is not mine, is next door to a novel, and in some respects better than one. It is a sort of memoir of herself, written by a certain lady I know. I am betraying no confidence in showing it to you; as she herself has lent it to a good many friends, and as long as her name is not mentioned, she is by way of wishing to have it circulated. She has, in fact, consulted me about having it printed. Now I want you, Mr. Laurence, to look through some of it, and tell me if the writer is not really a person of culture. Perhaps you would not mind reading out a little of it.'

'Am I to read it all through?' asked Laurence, as he took the seat which Mr. Rose gave up to him at the table.

'No, no,' said Lady Ambrose. 'Just pick out the best bits—a page here, and a page there.'

'Well,' said Laurence, 'I will, at any rate, start with the beginning. Now, are all of us ready to be let into the secrets of a young lady's soul?—

"One often feels a longing—who has not felt it?—

in the hurry and trouble of life to pause for a little while and look back upon the past, which we too too often forget, and see what it is we have grown from. We long to see how it has fared with ourselves—our own selves—our characters.'

'I think you may skip the beginning,' said Lady Ambrose, 'it's a little dull. Turn over a page or two.'

"*How strangely do they come back to me, those distant irrevocable days!*" Will that do?' asked Laurence.

'Yes,' said Lady Ambrose, 'I think so—go on there.'

"*—those distant irrevocable days, when the world was all new to me, and each experience was fresh and delightful, and I knew nothing of what self-reproach could mean. Ah, me! how times have changed since then! I sometimes fancy that I am hardly worthy now to look back upon my own past. I was gifted naturally with a curious warmth and sincerity of nature, that must have been very beautiful. But my peculiar gift, my own own gift, was a power of sympathy with others, by which quite naturally I used to throw myself into their places, understand their difficulties, and excite myself with their interests. When I was yet quite a child, that, I know, is what man felt in me—I never cared for boys—one man especially. It was then that life began for me, and what it all meant broke on me like a revelation. I, in my simplicity, never dreamt of his being more than a friend—I am not sure even that he was my dearest friend. I certainly never tried to charm him. But I did charm him, nevertheless, quite unconsciously. And he loved me passionately, devotedly, child as I was. Ah, God! when will another ever feel the same for me? And I—'O, my lost, my rejected friend! come back to me,' sometimes I still cry in my solitude; 'poor, and obscurely connected as you are, come back to me!' I shall never forget—poor little me!—the solemn*

shock of the moment, how my heart stood still, how all the blood came rushing into my cheek, when all of a sudden, as it seemed to me, and without any warning, he asked me to be his wife. Everything seemed to grow dizzy before me. It seemed to me as if the day of judgment had come. (Alas! will there ever be a day of judgment at all? is what I now ask.) I don't know what I said. I only remember distinctly my throwing myself into my mother's arms, and crying like a child—and I was one—as if my very heart would break. 'I am only a child!' that is what I said. 'Oh, mother, I am such a child!' The pathos of the scene often comes back to me even now—a shadowy timid memory, wondering if I shall give it harbour. I remember, too, how I said my prayers that night, and how I asked God——"

'I think you needn't read that,' said Lady Ambrose, 'go on a page or two further.'

"*I spent much of my time sketching.*" Shall I go on there?' said Laurence. "'*I had always a curiously appreciative eye for natural beauty.*" Will that do? Or shall I go on here—I think this is better—at the next paragraph?—"Oh the great waste of love in this our world."

'Yes, go on there,' said Mrs. Sinclair and several others.

"*Oh the great waste of love in this our world! How many a true heart would have given itself to me, could I only honestly and unreservedly have opened out to it all the depths of mine, and received it! And why did I never do so? It may be that I have known none who could really understand me—none that I could really love. But does that excuse me, not for not loving them, but for making as though I did love them, and so ruining their lives and
ing my own? sending them in the end to their brandy-*

bottles, and their gaming-hells, and their wild Cremornes, and myself—to the mental state in which I am now!

“Have I then lost it for ever—lost all hope of love? and must I quietly take up with my unappreciated loneliness? If it is so, if, indeed, it is so, surely I have brought it on myself. Was there not one—not my earliest lover—but another, who with a devotion I understood far more fully, laid himself at my feet, and offered me all his man’s devotion, and his man’s sympathy? Why, why in my madness did I send him from me, penniless as he was—but what of that?—driving him to death, and leaving myself to desolation? How does the image of his pale still face upturned towards the Indian star-light, with eyes which no star-light could ever touch any more, rise before me—his hand on his breast, and clasping with its last grasp a locket with my picture in it! Yes, I see him there, though I did not see him. I know how he must have looked, with his heart bullet-pierced—noble, beautiful in death. Unworthy as I was of you, my true hearted one, too late, too late, did I learn my own unworthiness. I was sitting in the window of our house at Ventnor, when the letter came that told me. It was evening; and I had been looking out through the summer twilight at the sea and at the sunset. As I read the letter, it dropped from my hand. I gave a gasp. I repressed a shrill cry. I felt a choking sensation in my throat; but I was very proud, and I even repressed a sob. I only, with entire calmness, turned my head towards the sea, and sighed a sigh deep-drawn as if my soul were in it. My cheek was pale, my eyes were wild and wistful—full of a solemn new earnestness. What the ~~ex~~ thoughts were that were busy in me, I cannot tell. ~~conscious of was this,~~
~~that far, far off were the~~ ~~faces of evening~~
~~sky and a trail of rip~~ ~~the sea.~~ O

'A little while ago, in the garden,' he said, 'I confessed to our kind host, Mr. Laurence, that there were a few things that I should like quietly to say to you; and Mr. Laurence has become sponsor for you all, and has promised, in your names, that you would suffer me to say them here. It is true,' Mr. Herbert went on, with a smile and a wave of his hand, 'that when I look round me at this glittering semicircle, I begin to feel not a little shy of you, and to repent of my own temerity. You, however, have given me to-day so much good food for reflection, that I feel bound, in the commonest honesty, to make what poor return I can. So remember, that if I weary you, you have really brought it upon yourselves.

'Well—to begin, then. You think me—you need not deny it, for I know you think me—a somewhat crotchety and melancholy individual, averse to modern knowledge and to modern progress, and seeing, as a rule, everything very yellow indeed, with his jaundiced eyes. But I think myself that I am not by any means so obstinate and so wrong-headed as I am quite aware that I appear to you; nay, my own opinion is that I err, rather, in not being quite obstinate enough. It is true that I have persistently pointed out that England is at present given over wholly to ignoble pursuits, and is ruining herself with deadly industries. But I have never said hitherto, so far as I know, that we might not rally, and that a brighter future might not be in store for us. Nay, I hailed a piece of news to-day with the most unfeigned delight, which seemed an omen to me that such a brighter future actually was in store for us. In a paper that reached me this afternoon there was a letter on the prospects of the English iron trade; and I read in that *letter that nineteen foundries in Middlesborough have been closed within the last three months, and the Moloch*

fires in their blast-furnaces extinguished ; that ten more foundries in the same place are scarcely able to continue work, and must very shortly be closed likewise ; and that the dense smoke-cloud that so long has darkened the whole country is beginning to clear away, and will open ere long upon astonished human eyes, that have never yet beheld it, the liquid melted blue of the deep wel of the sky. It is quite true that this indication of reviving prosperity for our country suggests more than proves. But at any rate it put me this afternoon, when I joined your party, into quite a right and hopeful mood for appreciating your conceptions of a better order of things. It is in fact simply to explain my appreciation that I am in this most unconscionable way, now detaining you.

‘ Let me say in the first place, then, how profoundly right I consider the manner in which you set to work. For it is one of the most vital of all truths, that in a perfect state all the parts will be perfect ; and that if the highest classes be as good as they can be, so also will be all the other classes. And I want to tell you, in the next place, how entirely fair and lovely did all the elements seem to be, out of which you composed for your highest classes their ideal existence. For you gave them even outward grace that could adorn life, and every inward taste and emotion that could enrich it, and every species of intellectual activity that could stimulate it. Your society was indeed to be truly the *crème de la crème* : it was to be made beautiful, and profound, and brilliant, by lovers, and theologians, and wits, and men of science and poets, and philosophers, and humourists—all men and women of the world, and fit to live in society, as well as to educate it. This would indeed be, as was said at dinner, Rome and Athens and Florence, at their best, and let me add Paris also, united and reanimated

enriched by the possession of her wider knowledge and the possibilities of her speculation. That truly is a fascinating picture. But even that is not all. There was your city itself too, in which a never-fading glimpse was given us, with its groves, its gardens, its palaces, and its exquisite reproductions of the world's most ancient architectures; and all this under our sunniest English skies and by our truest English sets. At evening, Mr. Herbert, smiling, and clasping his hands gently, "now I should like to live in a city like that! I can literally see it now with my mind's eye, whilst I am talking. I see its private houses with their windows of wrought marble; I see its theatres, its museums, its chapels and churches of all denominations, its scientific lecture rooms, and its convents. For what strikes me more forcibly than anything is that all forms of faith and philosophy seem to find here an impartial home, and to unite in animating one harmonious social life. In fact, so vividly do I see this scene which your words have called up before me, that I want very much, if you will let me, to add one small feature to it, myself. It is a very humble detail, this of mine. In the eyes of the men of science, who lead modern thought it is simply a sanitary matter. It relates to the way in which you shall dispose of your dead. Now in this, at least, you will be surprised to hear I quite keep pace with the times, being a sincere advocate for cremation; and what I should want to do in your city, would be to supply it with an establishment, hidden underground, where the bodies of the dead should be turned into gas, in properly devised retorts; the gas from each body being received in a small separate *gasmeter*. Above these gasworks, and amongst your *fair towers* and spires, and your superb institutions, and *art-galleriex*, I would build a circular domed temple of

umbred marble, blind and blank upon the face of it, without carved work, and without window; only there should be written above the portal, not as in Dante's vision,

Per me si va nell' eterno dolore,
Per me si va tra la perduta gente—

but one verse out of our English translation of the Bible, for women and little children to read; and another verse out of a Latin poet, which is, I believe, an equivalent for the original of that translation, for men and scholars to read. The first should be, "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." And the other:

Quæris quo jaceas post obitum loco?
Quo non nata jacent.

And within, around the dark walls, should be a number of separate shrines, like—to use the simile that Dante would have chosen—the stalls in a great stable; and to each shrine there should be a separate gas-jet. And when the life of any was over, after the fire had done its work upon the dead body, that man or woman who felt most bitterly the loss of the one that had been, should repair to this temple, to an appointed shrine, and there, in silence kneeling before it, should light the gas-jet; and thus evoking for the last time that which was once so loved and loving, pass, with what thoughts might be, a brief vigil before it, till its flicker grew slowly faint upon the watcher's face, and at length it went out and ended utterly and for ever. And above, over these sanctuaries of bereavement and final leave-taking, there should hang from the domed roof one rude iron lamp, *always burning*—casting a pale flare upwards upon the darkness. This would be the common lamp of the poor

for whose sake, dying, no one felt bereavement, or whom no one at any rate could find time to say good-bye to ; but who thus united together, apart by themselves, would do all that would be at all seemly in them—would remind you mutely and unobtrusively by their joint light, that one thing at least they shared with you, namely death. It is not of the poor, however, that I am mainly thinking now. It is of your higher classes, who have leisure to feel sorrow and all its holy influences. And these, I say, would find in this simple funeral service one that would meet all their diverse needs, and be in tune with all their diverse feelings. It would suit all. For to some it would symbolise an absolute disbelief in any life beyond ; and to all the rest it would symbolise a bewildered doubt about any life beyond. For in one or other of these states of mind everyone would be.

‘Do you deny it?’ exclaimed Mr. Herbert, raising his voice suddenly and looking round the theatre with a passionate anger, at which the whole audience were literally electrified. ‘Do you deny it?’ he exclaimed. ‘I tell you that it is so. I tell you too that that is your own case, and that in your Utopia you have aggravated the evil, and have not remedied it. You are all deniers or doubters, I tell you, every one of you. The deniers, I know, will not contradict me ; so at present I need not speak to them. It is to you—the majority, you who *will* contradict me ; you who are so busy with your various affirmations, with your prayers, your churches, your philosophies, your revivals of old Christianities, or your new improvements on them ; with your love of justice, and humanity, and toleration ; it is to you that I speak. It is to you that I say that, however enlightened and however sure you may be about all *other matters*, you are darkened and uncertain as to this

—whether there really is any God at all who can hear all the prayers you utter to Him, or whether there really is any other life at all, where the aspirations you are so proud of will be realised, and where the wrongs you are so pitiful over will be righted. There is not one amongst you who, watching a dead friend flickering for the last time before you in the form of a gas-flame, and seeing how a little while and this flame was with you, and again a little while and it was not with you, would be at all sure whether this was really because, as your hearts would suggest to you, it went to the Father, or because, as your men of science would assert to you, it went simply—out.

‘Listen to me for a moment and I can prove that this is so to you. You are rich, and you have leisure to think of things in what light you will, and your life is to a great extent made easy for you by the labour of others. I do not complain of that. There can be no civilisation without order, and there can be no order without subordination. Outward good must be apportioned unequally, or there would be no outward goods to apportion. But you who have the larger share of these are bound to do something for those who have the less. I say you are *bound* to do so ; or else sooner or later that large share will be taken away from you. Well, and what is it you propose to do ? I know your answer—I have heard it a thousand times. You will educate them—you will teach them. And truly if you know how to do that properly, you will have done all you need do. But,’ exclaimed Mr. Herbert, his voice again rising, and quivering with excitement, ‘that is just what you do not know. I am not casting my words at random. Out of your own mouths will I judge you. There never was a time when you talked so much as now about teaching

the people, and yet do not you yourselves confess that you cannot agree together as to what to teach them? You can agree about teaching them—I know this too well—countless things that you think will throw light upon life; but life itself you leave a blank darkness upon which no light can be thrown. You say nothing of what is good in it, and of what is evil. Does success in it lie in the enjoyment of bodily pleasures, or in the doing of spiritual duty? Is there anything in it that is right for its own sake, or are all things right only because of their consequences? And seeing that, if we struggle for virtue, our struggles can never be quite successful here, is there any other place where they may have, I do not say their reward, but their consummation? To these questions only two answers can be given, and one must be entirely true, and the other entirely false. But you—you dare not give either; you are too enlightened. It is true that *you* can afford to be liberal about these matters; you can afford to consider truth and falsehood equally *tolerable*. But for the poor man surely it is not so. It must make some difference to him what you teach him, whether your teaching is to open his eyes to his God and to his duty, and so place his noblest happiness in his own hands, or whether it is to open his eyes to those *verified* Utilitarian principles from which he will learn that his own life and labour are only not utterly contemptible, because they conduce to a material well-being in which he himself can have no share. If, with entire belief yourselves, you are prepared to give him the former teaching, why then it is well and good both for him and you. But if not, beware of teaching him at all. You will but be removing a cataract from his mind's eye that he may stare aghast and piteous at his own poverty and nakedness, or that he *may gaze with a wild beast's hunger* at your own truly

noble prosperity which he can never taste, save in the wild beast's way.

‘But enough of the poor: enough of this division of happiness. Let me ask you to consider now what sort of happiness there is to divide—I say divide, meaning that you will get the whole of it. And as I have said before, this happiness is very fair in seeming. Knowledge, and culture, and freedom, and toleration—you have told us what fine things all these can do for you. And I admit it myself too; I feel it myself too. Lovely, indeed, to look upon are the faiths, the philosophies, the enthusiasms of the world—the ancient products of the ages—as the sunshine of the modern intellect falls on them. See, they look clearer, and brighter, and more transparent—see, they form themselves into more exquisite and lucid shapes, more ærial structures. But why? Do not deceive yourselves; it is for a terrible reason. It is because, like a fabric of snow, they are one and all dissolving.

‘Listen, and I will show you that this is so. Aristotle says that what is truly a man's Self is the thinking part of him. This sooner or later all the other parts obey—sooner or later, willingly or unwillingly; and if this Self be base, the whole man will be base; if the Self be noble, the whole man will be noble. And as it is with the individual man, so it is with the ages and the generations. They obey their several Selves, whatever these Selves may be. The world once had a Self whose chief spokesman was a Jewish peasant called Jesus; and sooner or later the world followed him. Later on, it had a Self whose chief spokesmen were Dominics or Luthers or Loyolas; and in like manner the world followed them. Later still, it had got another Self, and the chief spokesmen of this were Voltaires and Rousseaus. And in each

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

'So clever a book, despite its faults, that it deserves criticism of the admonitory rather than the objurgatory kind. . . . Here is a man who can write epigrams, and we hope that he will write more.'—ATHENÆUM.

'A decidedly clever book. There is plenty of epigram in its literary style. . . . There is a very clever imitation of Mr. Matthew Arnold's (Mr. Luke) poetry; but the best parody in the book is that of a sermon of Mr. Jowett, and this is really so good that it might well be a reminiscence of a discourse actually delivered in Balliol Chapel.'—WORLD.

'The introduction of living personages under transparent disguises, to point the moral and adorn the tale of *The New Republic*, cannot be justified, and should not be encouraged. This is, nevertheless, a naughty world, and it is more than probable that the obnoxious story will be the first item to which readers in general will refer. The parodies of some of our most conspicuous theological, scientific, and philosophical guides are unquestionably happy.'—ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.

'The aim of the book, and the general vigour of execution, render the volume thoroughly acceptable. . . . *The New Republic* will attract attention both by its forcible delineation of character and the earnestness of the author's thoughts.'—SCOTSMAN.

BOOKS BY MR. MALLOCK.

THE NEW REPUBLIC. Post 8vo. cloth, 3s. 6d.; picture boards, 2s. FINE PAPER EDITION, pott 8vo. cloth, gilt top, 2s. net; leather, gilt edges, 3s. net.

THE NEW PAUL AND VIRGINIA. Post 8vo. cloth, 2s. 6d.

POEMS. Small 4to. bound in parchment, 8s.

IS LIFE WORTH LIVING? Crown 8vo. cloth, 6s.

London: CHATTO & WINDUS, 111 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.



STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
STANFORD AUXILIARY LIBRARY
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305-6004
(415) 723-9201

All books may be recalled after 7 days

DATE DUE

JUN 07 1998
JUN 07 1998



3 6105 020 080 177

823.6

M25me

NOV 5 '84

NOV 6 '87
FEB 10 1979

Stanford University Library
Stanford, California

In order that others may use this book,
please return it as soon as possible, but
not later than the date due.



